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HISTORY

OF

SCOTLAND.

BY PATRICK FRASER TYTLER, ESQ.

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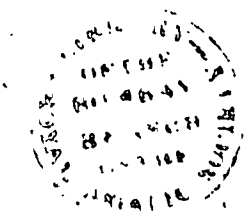
VOLUME IX.



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PREFACE.

The letters of Queen Elizabeth given in the Appendix to this Volume, and now printed for the first time, are taken from originals written entirely in the Queen's own hand, or from contemporary copies of such originals. They were her private and confidential letters; a circumstance which renders them highly valuable, both as throwing light on the personal character and peculiarities of this famous Queen, and on the secret history of the times.

The letters of Elizabeth, which have hitherto been given to the world, have been almost exclusively letters of State, written by Lord Burghley, or some other of her Councillors, and signed by the Queen. It is scarcely necessary to point out the difference between the *generality* of these last, which

are indeed public papers, and the *individuality* of the letters printed in this Volume, which were strictly sealed, and meant only for the eye of the Prince to whom they were addressed.

Of these latter, some of the most curious are preserved in the MS. Collections of the Right Hon. Sir George Warrender, already alluded to in the Preface to Volume Eighth of this History; and of which his liberality has, for the last two years, permitted the Author the fullest use.

DEVONSHIRE PLACE,
December 4, 1843.

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HISTORY

OF

SCOTLAND.

CHAP. I.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1586-7—1589.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Pope.*
Elizabeth.	Henry III. Henry IV.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Sextus V.

The conduct of Elizabeth on the death of the Queen of Scots was marked by much dissimulation and injustice. After having signed the warrant for her execution, commanded it to be carried to the Seals, and positively interdicted Davison, to whom she delivered it, from any further communication with her till it was obeyed, she suddenly turned fiercely round upon him and her Council, and cast on them the whole guilt of Mary's blood. In a moment she denied, or pretended to forget, everything which she had done. She had declared to Sir Robert Melvil, that she would not spare his royal mistress' life for one hour; now she swore vehemently that she never intended to take it. She had assured Davison,

with a great oath, that she meant the execution to go forward; now she loudly protested that she had commanded him to keep the warrant till he received further orders. She had laboured anxiously with Paulet to have Mary secretly made away with; and now she did not scruple to call God to witness, under awful obtestations, that her determined resolution had been all along to save her life.[1] And her subsequent conduct was perfectly in character with all this. On the day after the execution, Lord Shrewsbury wrote from Fotheringay to the Court, which was then at Greenwich. Next morning, at nine, his letters were brought to the palace by his son Henry Talbot, and the news became public. Soon after, the bells of the city, and the blazing of bonfires, proclaimed the happiness of the people.[2] It was impossible that these demonstrations should have escaped the notice of Elizabeth; and we know from Davison, every word of whose "Apology" carries truth and conviction with it, that the Queen that same night was made aware of Mary's execution;[3] but she took no notice, and kept an obstinate silence. Apparently none of her ministers dared to allude to the event; and when after four days the news was at last forced upon her, she broke into a hypocritical

[1] Supra, Vol. VIII. p. 383. Life of Thomas Egerton, Lord Chancellor, p. 119. Chasteauneuf to Henry III., 28th February, 1587. Also, MS. Minutes of Carey's Message. Warrender MSS.

[2] Life of Egerton, pp. 117, 119. Letter of Chasteauneuf to Henry III., 28th February, 1587. It ought to be remembered that Chasteauneuf uses the new style.

[3] Sir Harris Nicolas' Life of Davison, p. 268.

passion of astonishment, tears, and indignation. She upbraided her councillors with having purposely deceived her,[1] chased Burghley from her presence, and committed Secretary Davison to the Tower. It was in vain that this upright and able, but most unfortunate of men pleaded, with all the energy of truth, the commands of his Sovereign for everything that he had done. She knew he had no witnesses of their conversation; charged him with falsehood and disobedience; compelled Burghley, who must have been well assured of his innocence, to draw up a severe memorial against him; had him tried before the Star Chamber; degraded him from his office of Secretary; inflicted on him a fine which amounted to absolute ruin; and never afterwards admitted him to the least enjoyment of her favour.[2]

All this was in keeping with the subtlety and disregard of truth which sometimes marked Elizabeth's proceedings, when she had any great object to gain. It was part of a premeditated plan by which she hoped to mislead Europe, and convince its States that she was really guiltless of Mary's blood: but ultimately it had no effect on the Continent; and it was too palpably fictitious to be successful for a moment in Scotland, where the facts were well known. In that country, the news of Mary's execution was received with a universal burst of indigna-

[1] Wright, Life and Times of Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 332. Wolley to Leicester, Sunday, 1586. This Sunday was the 12th February.

[2] Nicolas' Life of Davison, pp. 82, 83; and Appendix, pp. 235, 236, 260, 263.

tion, and open threats of revenge. But the English wardens, Lord Scrope and Sir John Foster, were provided against immediate attack; and the season of the year, which was seed-time, rendered it difficult for the Scots to assemble in any force.[1]

It was Mr Roger Ashton, a gentleman of James' bed-chamber, whom he had sent to London some time before this, that brought the King the first certain intelligence of his mother's death. Ashton arrived in Edinburgh about the seventh day after the execution; and Lord Scrope, who had despatched a spy to watch James' motions, wrote in alarm to Walsingham, that the monarch was grievously offended, and had sworn that so foul an act of tyranny and injustice should not pass unrevenged.[2] The feelings, however, of this Prince were neither deep nor lasting. Even at this sad moment, selfishness and the assurance of undivided sovereignty neutralized his resentment; and he suffered some expressions of satisfaction to escape him, which his chief minister, Secretary Maitland, did not choose should reach any but the most confidential ears.[3] Meantime, as Ashton's information was secret, James took no public notice of it, but sent in haste for Lord Maxwell, Ker of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Sir John Foster to Walsingham, 26th February, 1586-7. Also MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Scrope to Walsingham, 14th February, 1586-7.

[2] Lord Scrope to Walsingham. Queen Elizabeth and her Times, vol. ii. p. 333, 21st February, 1586-7. Also St. P. Off. B.C., Sir H. Woddrington to Walsingham, 25th February, 1586-7.

[3] MS. Calderwood. Brit. Mus., Ayscough, 4738, fol. 974.

Ancrum, and young Fernyhirst.[1] These were reckoned amongst his most warlike Border leaders; and whilst the country rang with threats of revenge, the King shut himself up in his palace, and held conference with them and his most confidential nobles.

Amid these consultations, Mr Robert Carey was despatched by the English Queen to convey her apology to Scotland. This young courtier was the son of Lord Hunsdon, Elizabeth's cousin-german, and she selected him as a personal favourite of the Scottish King. He carried with him a letter written in her own hand, in which she expressed the excessive grief which overwhelmed her mind, in consequence of what she termed, "the miserable accident which had befallen, far contrary to her meaning;"[2] and he was instructed to throw the entire blame of the tragedy at Fotheringay upon Davison and her Council. On arriving at Berwick, Carey forwarded a letter requesting an audience; but this the King declined to grant till the Envoy had stated, on his honour, whether his mother, the Queen of Scots, was dead or alive; and when it was answered that she was executed, James peremptorily refused to see the ambassador, and commanded him to proceed no farther into Scotland. He added, however, that he would send some members of his Council to Berwick, to whom the letter and message of the English Queen might be delivered.

[1] Lord Scrope to Walsingham, 21st February, 1586-7. Wright's Elizabeth, vol. ii. p. 333.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 25th February, 1586-7. Also Warrender MS. Vol. A, p. 240. MS. Letter. Elizabeth to James.

On any other occasion the wrath of Elizabeth would have blazed high and fierce at such an indignity; but at this moment she was placed in circumstances which compelled her to digest the affront; and Carey communicated her false and ungenerous version of the story of Mary's death to Sir Robert Melvil and the Laird of Cowdenknowes, who met him for this purpose at Berwick.[1] All this failed, as may readily be believed, to convince James, or appease the general indignation of the people. By this time the execution of the Scottish Queen, with its affecting details, was known throughout the country; and whatever may have been the King's secret resolutions upon the subject, he felt that it would be almost impossible to resist the deep and increasing current of popular fury which was sweeping on to its revenge.

Many symptoms daily occurred to show this: Already the Scottish Border chiefs had so strictly waylaid every road and pass, that not a letter or scrap of intelligence could be conveyed to the English Court: three Scottish scouts, with troopers trained to the duty, and armed to the teeth, were stationed at Linton Bridge, Coldingham Moor, and beyond Haddington, who watched day and night, and pounced on every packet. The system of secret intelligence was at a stand; Walsingham pined for news, and complained that his "little blue-cap lads," who used to bring him word of all occurrences, were

[1] Warrender MSS. Vol. A, p. 241. Mr Carey's Credit. MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 10th March, 1586-7.

no more the men he had known them. Although the season of the year was unfavourable, the Borders were already stirring; some minor Scottish forays took place; and Bothwell, whose power was almost kingly on the marches, intimated unequivocally, that he only delayed his blow that it might fall the more heavily. He refused to put on mourning, striking his mailed glove on his breast, and declaring that the best "dule weed" for such a time, was a steel coat. Nor did he stand alone in these sentiments. Lord Claud Hamilton, and his brother, Arbroath, offered, on the moment, to raise three thousand men, and carry fire and sword to the gates of Newcastle; whilst Buccleugh, Cessford, and Fernyhirst, were only restrained from an outbreak by the positive injunctions of the King, and stood full armed, and fiery-eyed, straining like blood-hounds in the slip, ready to be let loose on a moment's warning against England.

The first circumstance which offered any perceptible check to these dread appearances, was the arrival of an able letter addressed by Walsingham to Sir John Maitland of Thirlestane, the Scottish Secretary of State, which was evidently meant for the King's eye. Thirlestane, originally bred to the law, was then high in his master's favour, and had risen by his talents as a statesman to be his most confidential minister. He was the son of Sir Richard Maitland, and younger brother of the Secretary Lethington; and although his powers were less brilliant and commanding than those wielded by that extraordinary man, his good sense, indefatigable application to

business, and personal intrepidity, made him a valuable servant to his Sovereign, and a formidable antagonist to the higher nobility, who envied and disliked him. To him, therefore, Walsingham wisely addressed this letter, or rather memorial, in which he argued the question of peace or war, and pointed out the extreme folly and impolicy of those Councils which, at such a moment, urged the young King to a rupture with England. His reasons were well calculated to make an impression upon James.[1] Adverting to the injustice of the quarrel, he described, with great force of argument, the effects that a war with England must inevitably produce on his title to the succession after the Queen's death, and the certain alienation of the whole body of the English nobility and people from a Prince who first revived the ancient and almost forgotten enmity between the two nations, and then hoped to be welcomed as the successor of so great and popular a Princess as Elizabeth. As for Spain and France, on whose assistance it was reported he chiefly depended, could he for a moment imagine that Spain would prove true to him?—a country which hated him for his religion; or France, whose policy was to counteract, by every possible method, an event which must be so fatal to her power as the union, whether by conquest or otherwise, of the Crowns of England and Scotland? Could he believe that the French monarch would assist him to a conquest which, if com-

[1] His letter, which is very long, is printed entire by Spottiswood, pp. 359, 360, 361, 362.

pleted, must threaten his own crown? Had he forgotten that the monarchs of England still insisted on their right to the throne of France? Besides, could it be credited for an instant, that the King of that country would ever cordially unite his interests with a monarch so nearly allied as James to the family of Guise—a house which Henry hated in his heart, and which he suspected to aim at his deposition?

There can be no doubt, that these arguments of so far-sighted a statesman as Walsingham, were not thrown away eventually upon James; but at the moment the impression was scarcely perceptible, and for some time everything portended war.

The Scottish Borders, which during the winter and spring had been kept in tolerable quietness, broke into open hostility as the summer advanced. Six successive Scottish forays swept with relentless havoc through the Middle Marches; and Sir Cuthbert Collingwood, who commanded in those parts, found himself too weak to restrain the incursions of the fierce marauders of Cessford, Fernyhirst, Bothwell, and Angus. In a piteous letter to Walsingham, he described the country as having been reduced to a desert—wasted with fire and sword, and filled with lamentation and dismay;[1] and he remonstrated with the Scottish wardens in strong terms. But so little impression did Collingwood's complaints make on the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Collingwood to Walsingham, 12th July, 1587. Ibid. B.C., Same to same, 21st May, 1587. Ibid. B.C., Same to same, with Enclosure, 23d June, 1587; and Ibid., Same to same, 23d August, 1587.

Scottish government, and so inadequate was the assistance sent him by his own, that Buccleugh, Cessford, and Johnston, with a force of two thousand men, attacked him in his castle at Eslington, slew seventeen of his garrison, took one of his sons prisoner, severely wounded another, and but for the fleetness of his horse had made captive the Warden himself.

It seems difficult to reconcile these flagrant outrages, which continued more or less throughout the year 1587, though unnoticed by our general historians, with James' warm coalition with Elizabeth in 1588. The probable explanation may be, that the young King of Scots, without serious intentions of war, was not displeased that Elizabeth should have a little temporary experience of his power of disturbing her; that he was not annoyed by such excesses; and even, as Foster asserted and Burghley suspected, secretly encouraged them.[1] He knew that Elizabeth was anxious to conciliate him, and had determined, at all hazards, to purchase peace with Scotland; and he, on his side, had resolved that he would not sell it too cheap. He was well aware of the embarrassments with which the English Queen was now surrounded. The mighty preparations of Spain against England were no secret. The rebellion of Tyrone in Ireland was at its height. In Scotland the Catholic lords, Huntly, Errol, Angus, Maxwell, and their adherents were powerful, warlike, and stirring, animated

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Robert Carvyle to Walsingham, 4th December, 1587. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Burghley to Fowler, 17th April, 1588.

with the bitterest animosity against Elizabeth, whom they detested as the murderess of their Queen and the implacable enemy of their religion. Another thorn in the side of England was the constant friendly intercourse between the Irish insurgents and the Scottish Isles. From these nurseries of warlike seamen and soldiers, strong reinforcements had already joined Tyrone; and the chiefs, who were as fierce and potent as so many little sea kings, drove a lucrative trade by serving him against England at a high price. This was another weapon in the hand of James. By means of his lieutenants, Huntly and Argyle, to whom the administration of the northern parts of his dominions was entrusted, he could let loose the Islesmen against Elizabeth, or detain them at home as suited his policy; and that Queen repeatedly requested him to exert this influence in her favour. To do this, however, with greater profit to himself, the King was not unwilling she should feel his power; and, with this view, he shut his eyes to the Border inroads, delayed remonstrating with Huntly on his intrigues with Spain, refused to apprehend the Jesuits who were lurking in his dominions, and gave himself no trouble to check the rising animosity against England. Yet in his heart he had no inclination for war. He felt the truth of Walsingham's argument, that any prolonged struggle at this moment with England would be fatal to his hopes of succession; and he flattered himself that he had the reins over the Catholic lords and the Spanish intriguers so completely in his hands, that he could

command peace with England at whatever moment the Queen chose to have his amity on his own terms. In such a hope it turned out that he was deceived. The Catholic party, supported by the money of Spain, commanding nearly all the northern counties; and having with them the sympathies of the people, who were enraged at the execution of Mary, gained in a short time a strength on which he had not calculated, and, far from being bridled, for some time dictated terms to him. But it is time to return from this digression to the course of events in Scotland.

The King, who was now on the eve of his majority, assembled a Convention of his nobility at Edinburgh, and determined to despatch ambassadors to the courts of France and Denmark.[1] To Henry the Third he proposed a renewal of the ancient league between the two kingdoms; whilst to the Danish monarch he made overtures of a matrimonial alliance.[2] But Henry, who was at this moment disposed to be on favourable terms with England, treated James' advances coldly; and although the Danish alliance eventually took place, its first suggestion does not appear to have been very cordially welcomed.[3]

The same Convention was signalized by an event

[1] Moyse's Memoirs. Bannat. ed., p. 64.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Carvyle to Walsingham, 3d June, 1587.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., A. B. to Walsingham, 19th August, 1587. Also, Car to Walsingham, B.C., St. P. Off., 11th Sept., 1587. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 65.

which brought a merited punishment on one of the basest of men. This was the fall of the Master of Gray, who was tried for high treason, condemned, and on the point of being executed, when his life was spared, and the sentence changed to banishment, at the intercession of the Earl of Huntly and Lord Hamilton. His accuser was Sir William Stewart, now about to proceed on the French embassy; and in his *dittay* or indictment, which has been preserved, were contained various points of treason.[1] But his most flagrant offence, which was completely proved, was the base betrayal of his trust in his recent negotiation in England, where he secretly recommended the death, instead of pleading for the life, of the Scottish Queen. At first, with his wonted effrontery, he attempted to brazen out the matter and overawe his enemies; but in the end he pleaded guilty; and, as abject as he had been insolent, threw himself on the King's mercy. None lamented his disgrace; for, although still young in years, Gray was old in falsehood and crime. Brilliant, fascinating, highly educated, and universally reputed the handsomest man of his time, he had used all these advantages for the most profligate ends; and his life, which to the surprise of many was now spared, had been little else than a tissue of treachery. He retired to France; and although, after some years, he was again permitted

[1] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. i. part iii. p. 157. Historie of James the Sext, p. 227. Spottiswood, p. 363.

to return to Scotland, he never recovered the commanding station from which he fell.[1]

James had now attained majority, and important subjects began to occupy his mind. Amid much that was frivolous and volatile, this young Prince sometimes evinced a sagacity in detecting abuses, and a vigour in devising plans for the amelioration of his kingdom, which surprised even those who knew him best. To reconcile his nobility, and extinguish those fierce and sanguinary family feuds which so frequently defied the laws and tore the kingdom in pieces,—to arrange the affairs of the Kirk, provide for its ministers, and establish a certain form of ecclesiastical polity,—to escape from the pressure of an enormous debt by recovering the crown lands, which had been greatly dilapidated during his minority,—and to take some decisive steps on the subject of his marriage; these were the chief points which now pressed themselves upon his attention, and to which he directed the labours of his principal minister, the Secretary Maitland. But difficulties encountered him at every step. Outwardly, indeed, the King's desire for a reconciliation amongst the nobles was accomplished; and, at the conclusion of the Parliament held in the capital,[2] the principal street exhibited a singular spectacle. A table was spread at the Cross, where a banquet was prepared by the magistrates; and a long line of nobles,

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 29th April, 1587. Ibid., Carvyle to Walsingham, 12th May, 1587.

[2] Historie of James the Sext, p. 229.

who had been previously reconciled and feasted by the King in the palace at Holyrood, was seen to emerge from its massive gateway, and walk in peaceful procession up the principal street of the city. Bothwell and Angus, Hume and Fleming, Glammis and Crawford, with many other fierce opponents who had been compelled by their sovereign's threats or entreaties to an unwilling embrace, marched hand in hand to take their seats at the board of concord, where they drank to each other amid the thunder of the castle guns, and the songs and shouts of the citizens. It was an imposing ceremony, but really an idle and hollow farce. The deep wounds of feudal hatred, and the sacred duty of feudal revenge, were not so easily cured or forgotten; and many of the hands now locked in each other were quivering with a desire to find occupation rather in grappling the throat than pledging the health of their brother. Before the year concluded, all accordingly was nearly as bad as before.

There was one point, however, on which all seemed agreed—a desire to attack England and avenge the death of Mary. So deep was this feeling, that Thirlestane, now raised to the high office of Chancellor, in closing the Parliament, made a stirring appeal to the assembled Estates; and such was the impression of his eloquence, that the nobles, in a transport of pity and enthusiasm, threw themselves upon their knees before the King, and, amid the clang of their weapons and imprecations against Elizabeth, took a

vow that they would hazard their lives and fortunes in the quarrel.[1]

These indications encouraged Huntly and the potent faction of the Catholic lords to a renewal, or rather more active continuance, of their intrigues with Spain and the Low Countries. Messengers were despatched thither, (not without the connivance of James,) who held out hopes to Philip of Scottish assistance in his great enterprise against England.[2] Various Jesuits and seminary priests in disguise (of whom Gordon and Dury were the most active) glided through Northumberland into Scotland, proceeded to the late convention at Edinburgh, and from thence to Aberdeen, where they continued their efforts, in conjunction with their foreign brethren, for the re-establishment of the Catholic faith and the dethronement of Elizabeth.[3] Apparently, all this was encouraged by the Scottish King. It is, indeed, sometimes exceedingly difficult to get at the real sentiments of a prince who prided himself upon his dissimulation: but, either from policy or necessity, he was soon so utterly estranged from England, and so completely surrounded by the Spanish faction, that Elizabeth began to be in serious alarm.[4]

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Carvyle to Walsingham, 3d August, 1587.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B C., Car to Walsingham, 11th Sept., 1587. Also, Ibid. B.C., Woddrington to Walsingham, 29th April, 1587.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Collingwood to Walsingham, 21st May, 1587.

[4] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Lord Hunsdon to Burghley, 14th Nov. 1587.

That great Princess was at this moment surrounded by dangers of no ordinary magnitude. Philip the Second of Spain was collecting against her that mighty armament, which was idly deemed to be invincible. The ports of Spain and Flanders rang with the din of arms and the bustle and confusion of military preparation. The Queen had been persuaded by Burghley and her chief councillors, that the execution of the Queen of Scots would prove a death-blow to the Catholic party, extricate her from all her difficulties, and confer upon her life and crown a security to which she had for many years been a stranger. But she was miserably disappointed. The accounts of the death of Mary were received by the whole of Christendom with one universal burst of astonishment and indignation. No sovereign had enforced more rigidly than Elizabeth the dogma of the inviolability and divine right of Princes, and their responsibility to God alone. The doctrine was generally received and acted upon by her royal allies; and they now arraigned her as an apostate from her own principles, and an open despiser of all that was holy, just, and true. Mary's servants and household were many of them foreigners; and, returning to their homes, spread over the Continent the touching story of her death. The hypocritical pretences of the Queen of England, by which she had endeavoured to shield herself from the odium of the execution, were generally discredited. It was said, that for the gratification of her own private revenge she had not scrupled to stain her hands with the blood of an innocent Queen; and that,

to escape the infamy of the fact, she had meanly and falsely thrown the blame upon an innocent councillor. The press teemed throughout Catholic Europe with innumerable publications. Histories, poems, pamphlets, and funeral orations, were circulated in every quarter on the alleged martyrdom of the Scottish Queen, and the execrable guilt of her by whom she had been murdered. The whole course of Elizabeth's public and private life was dissected, attacked, and exaggerated; and she was held up to the detestation of the world as the true daughter and inheritrix of all the wickedness, cruelty, irreligion, tyranny, and lust of her father, Henry the Eighth. The effect of all this, and the impression it made upon the Catholic mind throughout Christendom, was great: and when Philip began his mighty preparations against England, the projected invasion of that country partook of something like the sanctity of a crusade.

Surrounded by such complicated difficulties, it was not without alarm that Elizabeth heard of the estrangement of the Scottish King, and the bold proceedings of her enemies the Catholic lords. Confident of the assistance of Spain, with whose vast preparations they were well acquainted, they hoped to revolutionize Scotland, get possession of the King's person, destroy his Protestant advisers, and reëstablish the Catholic religion.[1] It was one principal branch of their plan to produce a diversion

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., ⁜ to Walsingham, 1st January, 1587-8.

against England in Ireland and the Western Isles, which should take place at the moment of the invasion by the Armada. For the accomplishment of these great designs, Lord Maxwell, a leading and powerful Catholic lord, was on the Continent in communication with Spain and Rome; Archibald Douglas was suspected to be seconding their efforts in England, and the disgraced Master of Gray in France; whilst Sir William Stewart, the brother of the once-powerful Arran, was busy at the head-quarters of the Prince of Parma.[1] In Scotland, Huntly, the great leader of the Catholic lords, with Lord Claud Hamilton, Mar, Angus, and Bothwell, were prepared, on the briefest warning, to assemble a force which the King, in his present circumstances of poverty and desertion, could not control. As was usual in Scotland, schemes of private assassination were mixed up with plots against the Government: not only the Chancellor Maitland but the King himself considered their lives in danger;[2] and James, in self-defence, was compelled to dissemble, and to aim at a neutrality which promised a temporary security.[3] But throughout all this, the real sentiments of the monarch experienced no alteration. He continued firm in his opposition to Spain, true to the reformed religion,

[1] MS. St. P. Off., January, 1587-8. Occurrences out of Scotland.

[2] MS. Letter, Brit. Mus., Caligula D, fol. Hunsdon to Burghley, 25th Nov., 1587. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Same to same, 14th Dec., 1587: and Ibid., same to same, 27th Dec., 1587.

[3] Id. Ibid.

and ready to league with England the moment Elizabeth, throwing off her parsimony, showed a sincere determination to assist him with money and troops. This the imminent dangers with which she was surrounded at length compelled her to do; and Lord Hunsdon, her cousin, who had recently gained an intimate knowledge of the intrigues of France by robbing the French Ambassador, Courcelles, of his despatches, was selected to open a communication with the King of Scots. But at this moment a circumstance, apparently slight, had nearly overturned all. Jane Kennedy, the daughter of a noble house, who had attended Mary in her last hours, suddenly arrived from France, obtained a private audience of the King, was closeted with him for two hours, and gave so touching an account of the tragedy at Fotheringay, that James refused to be comforted; and denouncing vengeance, broke off the conferences with England. But these feelings were evanescent: the violence of the northern earls, the fear of losing Elizabeth and cutting himself out of the succession, restored him to his calmer mood; and he despatched the Laird of Carmichael to meet Hunsdon on the Borders at Hutton Hall.[1] All, however, had to be transacted with the utmost secrecy; and nothing could be more alarming than the picture of the kingdom drawn by the English diplomatist. Huntly and the Catholics, he said, were almost in open re-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Hunsdon to Burghley, 23d January, 1587-8. Also, Ibid., same to same, 17th Jan. 1587-8.

bellion, earnestly pressing Philip and the Duke of Parma to attack England through Scotland; and offering, the moment the Spaniards made their descent, to join them with a body of troops which should overwhelm Elizabeth.[1] Against this there was little to oppose: for the Scottish King and the Kirk were on bad terms; and the Chancellor Maitland, the only man of statesmanlike views, although in heart a Protestant and a friend to England, lived in hourly dread of assassination by Bothwell or some of his desperate associates.[2] Under such trying circumstances, it says something for the King of Scots that he resisted the high offers made to him at this crisis by foreign princes, declared himself the determined opponent of Spain, resolved to support the reformed opinions, and coöperated cordially with the Queen of England. He assured Elizabeth that she could not detest more deeply than himself the plots of the Papists; that none of the messengers of Antichrist, their common enemy, should be encouraged; and that his single reason for suspending their usual loving intelligence was a feeling that she had failed to vindicate herself from the guilt of his mother's blood. To prove his sincerity against the Catholics, he summoned his forces, attacked the Castle of Lochmaben belonging to Lord Maxwell, who had now assumed

[1] MS. 1588-9, St. P. Off. Intercepted letters of Huntly, Morton, and Lord Claud Hamilton, in the name of the Catholic gentlemen of Scotland, to the King of Spain. This is a decipher by the noted Phelips.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Hunsdon to Burghley, 31st March, 1588.

the title of Morton, and, reinforced by an English battering-train, beat the castle about the ears of its captain, David Maxwell, whom he hanged with six of his men.[1] This spirit and severity enchanted Elizabeth; and she forthwith despatched Mr William Ashby to the Scottish Court with her thanks and congratulations. But the Ambassador promised far more than the Queen had the least intention of performing. His royal mistress, he said, was ready to settle a Duchy on her good brother, with a yearly pension of five thousand pounds. She would immediately raise for him a body-guard of fifty Scottish gentlemen; and, to meet the danger of a revolt by the Popish lords on the approach of the Armada, she would levy a corps of a hundred horse and a hundred infantry to act upon the Borders.[2] With these high offers James immediately closed; and Walsingham, for whose piercing glance and universal intelligence nothing was too minute or remote, having discovered that Thomas Fowler, an attached friend of the House of Lennox and a favourite of the Scottish King, was about to proceed on some private personal affairs to Edinburgh, contrived, through his means, to open a secret correspondence with James and Maitland his chief minister, which enabled them to traverse and overthrow the designs of Huntly and the Spanish faction.[3] All this was of the utmost

[1] Historie of James the Sext, p. 236.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., William Ashby to Lord Burghley, 6th August, 1588.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 13th November, 1588. Also, Ibid. Fowler to Walsingham, 18th December, 1588.

importance to Elizabeth. Ireland was saved from any invasion by the Islesmen; the Borders between England and Scotland were kept quiet; no Scottish auxiliaries were permitted to pass over to the service of her enemies; and she was enabled to concentrate her whole naval and military energies to meet the great crisis of her fate—the meditated invasion of the Armada. This she did, accordingly, in the noblest and most effective manner: and the result is familiar to all, in the utter discomfiture and dispersion of that mighty armament.

Not long after this occurred the assassination of the Duke of Guise and his brother the Cardinal of Lorrain, which removed two of her most powerful and talented opponents: so that, although the clouds still lowered, the imminency of the danger on the side of Spain and France had passed.

James now naturally looked for the performance of her promises; but he was cruelly disappointed. With the cessation of alarm, Elizabeth's deep-rooted habits of parsimony revived: the promised Duchy with its princely revenue, the annual pension, the intended body-guard, the English auxiliaries to act upon the Borders, melted away and were no more heard of:—Ashby, the Ambassador, it was alleged, had much exceeded his instructions; and the King, in great wrath, complained that he had been dandled and duped like a boy.[1] These irritated feelings were encouraged by the Spanish faction. Many

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Fowler to Walsingham, 29th Dec., 1588.

urged the King to seek revenge. Bothwell, ever anxious for broils, boasted that, without charging his master a farthing, he would bleed Elizabeth's Exchequer at the rate of two hundred thousand crowns a-year, or lay the country waste to the gates of Newcastle. The more moderate party hardly dared to advise; and the Chancellor Maitland, hitherto the firm friend of England, found himself compelled to unite with Huntly. The character of the young prince, and the dangerous and unsettled state of Scotland at this time, were strikingly described by Fowler in one of his letters to Walsingham. He found James, he said, a virtuous prince, stained by no vice, and singularly acute in the discussion of all matters of state; but indolent and careless, and so utterly profuse, that he gave to every suitor, even to vain youths and proud fools, whatever they desired. He did not scruple to throw away, in this manner, even the lands of his Crown; and so reckless was he of wealth, that, in Fowler's opinion, if he were to get a million from England, it would all go the same way. His pleasures were hunting, of which he was passionately fond; and playing at the *mawe*, an English game of chance, in which he piqued himself on excelling. In his dress he was slovenly, and his Court and household were shabby and unkingly; but he sat often in council, was punctual in his religious duties, not missing the sermons thrice a-week; and his manners betrayed no haughtiness or pride. It was evident to Fowler that he detested the rude and ferocious bearing of his great nobles, who were content to obey

him in trifles, but in all serious matters, touching life or justice, took the law into their own hands, and openly defied him. Upon this subject Fowler's expressions were remarkable. When it came to the execution of justice, it was evident, he said, his subjects feared him not, whilst he was terrified to deal with so many at once, looking tremblingly to the fate of his ancestors, of whom such as attempted to execute justice with severity, were uniformly put to death by their nobles.[1] Often had the King assured the intimate friend who wrote these letters, that it was misery to be constrained to live amid the wickedness of his barons, and that they made his existence a burden to him. Nor could he look for redress to his Council. Even the wisest and greatest amongst them, not excepting the Chancellor Maitland, were infinitely more occupied in private quarrels and family feuds than with the public business of the State; and, to increase their individual power, were content to flatter the King in the basest manner, and become suitors at Court for everything ungodly and unreasonable. Well might Walsingham exclaim, in answer to this sad dark picture of regal weakness and feudal misrule, "God send that young prince, being of himself every way well-inclined, good, wise, and faithful councillors, that may carry him in a constant course for the upholding of religion, and the establishing of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Fowler to Walsingham, 18th December, 1588. Also, Ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, 29th December, 1588.

justice in that realm."[1] As a cure for this miserable condition, the English Secretary recommended a Court of Star-chamber, and a change of councillors from the great nobles to the barons and burgesses. But neither measure was practicable; and Maitland, at this moment James' chief adviser, assured Fowler that the death of the Guises, instead of being attended with any favourable result in strengthening the English party in Scotland, would have an opposite effect. "Your Queen," said he, "thinks that she has lost in Guise a great enemy, and my master a great friend. Be assured it is not so. For a long time the King hath had no dealings with the Guise: he loved him not—nor is he sorry but rather glad that he is gone. But, mark me, this will make the King of Spain seek my master, and esteem him more than before: for by the Duke of Guise that Prince thought to have had all France at his devotion, except the Protestants,—to have subdued even them ere long, and to have been so strong as to have had his revenge on England, without our help here; but now Scotland is his only card to play against England, and that you will see ere long."[2]

These predictions were soon fully verified. The Popish earls, led by Huntly and Errol, entered into a more active and deep-laid correspondence with Spain and Rome. Large sums of money were remitted to them from Philip and the Pope; and letters

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Orig. Draft, Walsingham to Fowler, 22d Dec., 1588.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Fowler to Walsingham, 4th Jan., 1588-9.

were intercepted by Burghley, which proved, in the clearest manner, an intended rebellion. They were seized on the person of a Scotsman, who was detected carrying them to the Prince of Parma; and expressed, on the part of Huntly, Morton, Errol, and the rest of the Catholic noblemen and gentry of Scotland, their infinite regret at the discomfiture of the Armada; and their sorrow that the fleet had passed so near their coast without visiting them, when they were able to have raised a force such as could not have been resisted. They assured the Spanish King, that the outlay of a single Galeass in Scotland would have gone farther than ten on the broad seas; and that six thousand Spaniards, once landed there, would be joined by an infinite multitude of Scotsmen animated with the bitterest hatred to England, and who would serve him as faithfully as his own subjects. Huntly at the same time assured Parma, that his late confession and his signature to the Protestant Articles had been extorted from him against his conscience; but that in spite of all this he continued a true Catholic, and by this pretended change had acquired a greater power over the young King. In the same letters Errol professed the utmost devotion to the Catholic faith, congratulating himself on having been called from darkness to light; and Bruce informed Parma of the seasonable arrival of Chisholm, their agent, with the large sum entrusted to him, and of their having secured the Earl of Bothwell, who, though still a Protestant, had been bribed to embrace their party.

Copies of these letters were instantly sent down to James, who at first disbelieved the whole story, and dealt so leniently with the principal conspirators, that the plot, instead of being crushed in its first growth, spread its ramifications throughout the country, especially the northern counties, and grew more dangerous than before. Huntly was, indeed, imprisoned; but his confinement was a mere farce. The King visited him in his chamber and dined there; permitted his wife and servants to communicate freely with him; wrote him an affectionate remonstrance, and even kissed and caressed him.[1] This could end only one way. The captive, after a brief imprisonment, during which he made the most solemn asseverations of his innocence, was restored by the too credulous monarch to his former authority, and basely abused the royal forgiveness by seducing the fierce and potent Earl of Bothwell from his allegiance, and breaking into open rebellion.

This insurrection at first assumed the most formidable appearance: the whole of Scotland north of Aberdeen was on the eve of revolt; and Bothwell threatened, that if James ventured to take arms against the remoter insurgents, he would ravage the south in his absence and compel him to draw homewards. But this bravado, instead of intimidating, effectually roused the King, who, for the first and almost the last time in his life, exhibited a military spirit worthy of his ancestors. An army was instantly

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Ashby to Burghley, Edinburgh, 10th March, 1588-9. Also, Ibid., Same to same, 14th March, 1588-9.

assembled; a conspiracy for the seizure of James and his chief minister, Maitland the Chancellor, promptly discovered and defeated.[1] The Protestant nobles, led by the young Duke of Lennox and the Chancellor, rallied in great strength; the Earl of Mar, the three Lords Warden, Hume, Cessford, and Carmichael, the Earls of Morton, Angus, Marshal, Athol, and the Master of Glammis, gathered and concentrated their forces beyond the Forth; and the monarch, who was described by Ashby the English Ambassador, as "*fellon crabbed*," pushed on, at the head of his troops, to St Johnston, loudly declaring his resolution to wreck his rebels, and destroy them with fire and sword.[2]

This vigour and resolution had the best effect. The formidable stories of the mighty strength and preparations of the Catholic earls were found false and ridiculous,—their troops melted away. Bothwell's force, which was to effect such wonders, soon shrunk to thirty horse; and James, advancing by Dundee and Brechin, carried everything before him, and compelled the rebels to evacuate Aberdeen, the centre of their strength. It had been expected that the enemy would here give battle, but their courage failed them. Crawfurd secretly fled; others openly deserted; and the King, who had shown unusual hardihood, and watched two nights in his arms, was disappointed of an opportunity to win his spurs. But the expedition was completely successful: Huntly was driven from

1 MS. St. P. Off., Ashby to Burghley, 8th April, 1589.
2 MS. St. P. Off., Fowler to Burghley, 9th April, 1589.

Aberdeen to Strathbogie, his own country, where he surrendered himself prisoner, and was carried in triumph by the King to Edinburgh. Slanes, the principal castle of Errol, was taken and garrisoned; the Lairds of Frendraught, Grant, and Macintosh, the powerful clans of the Drummonds and the Forbeses, with many others who had been seduced from their allegiance by the Catholic faction, submitted themselves; and James, in high spirits and exultation, returned to his capital with the resolution of proceeding instantly against Bothwell. But this fierce chief, who was now crest-fallen and in no state to make resistance, threw himself on his knees before the King in the Chancellor's garden, and was sent prisoner to Holyrood.[1]

A Convention of the nobility was now held at Edinburgh, and the rebel earls, Huntly and Crawford, having been brought to trial and convicted of high treason, escaped with imprisonment,—contrary to the remonstrances of the leaders of the Kirk, who clamoured for the death of idolaters. Their confession, however, had softened the King; and their high connexions rendered it dangerous to use extremities. Bothwell also was brought to trial; but, after his usual fierce fashion, declared his innocence; reviled and accused the Chancellor, and stood on his defence. The circumstance of his being in arms against the Government, and his cordial coöperation with the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 12th May, 1589.

Northern rebellion, was, indeed, notorious to all; but the dread of his power and revenge intimidated the Court. The trial was prolonged till midnight, and it required the presence and remonstrances of the King to procure a conviction. He was then shut up in Tantallon;[1] but was enlarged, after a few months, on payment of a heavy fine to the Crown.[2]

This unusual exertion of James in destroying the designs of Huntly and the Catholics, was followed by a fit of extraordinary activity on another subject —his marriage with Denmark. At the time of the first proposal of a matrimonial alliance with this kingdom, Arran was in power, and had engaged to Elizabeth that his royal master should continue single for three years. Accordingly, on the arrival of the Danish Ambassadors, they found themselves treated with such irritating coldness and neglect, that it required much management on the part of Sir James Melvil to prevent an open rupture, and convince them that the affront proceeded not from the young King but his haughty minister.[3] His endeavours, however, succeeded; and although the Danish monarch, in some disgust, disposed of his eldest daughter, the Princess Royal, the intended bride of James, to the Duke of Brunswick, he afterwards declared his willingness to bestow her sister, the Princess Anne,

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 25th May, 1589. Ibid., Fowler to Walsingham, 26th May, 1589.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 26th Aug., 1589.

[3] Melvil's Memoirs, Bannat. ed. p. 337.

upon the Scottish King. The intrigues of England, however, continued. Elizabeth, who had gained to her interest the Chancellor Maitland, recommended the Princess of Navarre; and the celebrated poet Du Bartas visited Scotland on a secret mission to propose the match. This preference probably proceeded from a suspicion that the Princess Anne was not sound in her attachment to the Protestant opinions, which afterwards turned out to be well founded; but James utterly disrelished the dictation of the Queen and the boldness of his Council. It was time, he felt, that in so weighty a matter as his marriage he should vindicate his liberty of choice and follow his own judgment: he had, besides, heard a report that the Princess of Navarre was old and crooked; and although his great nobles affected the alliance with France, the bulk of his people, the Burgh towns and the merchants, were all keen for Denmark.[1] This decided the young King; and he now despatched the Earl Marshal, with a noble suite, to proceed to Copenhagen and conclude the match.

On his arrival, the Scottish Ambassador found that, if cold or slow at first, the Danish Court were hot enough (to use Ashby's expression to Walsingham) as soon as there was a serious proposal made. All was soon arranged, and the utmost bustle prevailed. In some amusing contemporary letters, the Queen-mother is described as the soul and centre of the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 22d July, 1589. Melvil's Memoirs, pp. 363, 364.

whole preparations—perpetually buying silks, or cheapening jewellery, or urging on a corps of five hundred tailors, who sat daily stitching and getting up the most princely apparel. Women, guards, pages, lackeys, all, from the highest to the lowest, who were to compose the suite of the bride, received orders to hold themselves in readiness. A fleet of twelve sail with brass ordnance, was fitted out to transport her; and it was reported that she was likely to land in Scotland before James' wedding hose were ready or a house furnished to receive her.[1] But these anticipations proved fallacious; and the King, who had worked up his usually phlegmatic temper to an extraordinary pitch of chivalrous admiration, was kept for some weeks in an agony of suspense by contrary winds and contrary councils. This did not prevent him, however, from forwarding to his ambassadors a gentle remonstrance touching the smallness of the "tocher," or dowry; but Denmark refused to add a farthing to it; and the monarch, affecting the utmost anxiety for the young Princess, who, he had persuaded himself, was utterly in despair and love-sick at the delay, urged her instant departure.[2] At length she sailed; but the squadron encountered a tremendous storm, which shattered and dispersed the ships, and compelled them to return to Norway in so leaky and disabled a condition, that every hope of resuming

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 22d July, 1589. Fowler to Walsingham, 5th August, 1589.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Fowler to Walsingham, 5th August, 1589.

their voyage for that season was abandoned.[1] During all this period of suspense, the young King's romantic agitation continued. He was a true lover, as Ashby described him to Walsingham in a letter from the Court at Holyrood; thinking every day a year till he saw his love and joy approach: at one time, flying to God, and commanding prayers and fasting for her safe arrival; at another, falling upon the Scottish witches, to whose unhallowed rites and incantations he ascribed the tempests which delayed her. Nor were these pretended agonies: for when at last the news arrived of her danger and escape, he suddenly adopted the idea of proceeding in person to Norway, and determined (to use the poetic phraseology of Ashby to Queen Elizabeth) "to commit himself and his hopes, Leander like, to the waves of the ocean, all for his beloved Hero's sake."[2]

This resolution he carried into effect on the twenty-second of October—embarking at Leith, accompanied by the Chancellor Maitland, who had been forced to waive his repugnance to the match; by his favourite minister and chaplain Mr David Lindsay, and a select suite of his nobility. On the day after his departure, a Declaration of the reasons which had prompted so unusual a step was delivered to the Privy Council, and afterwards made public. It was

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Walsingham, 5th, 24th Sept., 1589. Also, Ibid., same to same, 2d Oct., 1589. Ibid., same to same, 10th Oct., 1589. Ibid., same to Queen Elizabeth, 23d Oct., 1589.

[2] Spottiswood, pp. 377, 378.

written wholly in the King's hand, and is ludicrously characteristic of the monarch. We learn from his own lips that it had been very generally asserted by his loving subjects, that their sovereign was a "barren stock," indisposed to marriage, and careless of having children to succeed him in the throne. His mind, too, had been attacked in most unmannerly terms:—it was insinuated that the Chancellor "led him by the nose," as if he were an unreasonable creature, a mere child in intellect and resolution, or an "impudent ass that could do nothing of himself." To confute the first slander, he had determined to seek his Queen forthwith, and marry her as speedily as the winds and waves would permit. To give the lie to the second aspersion, he assured his people, on the honour of a Prince, that he alone, unknown to Chancellor or Council, had conceived the first idea of this winter voyage; that his resolution was taken in the solitude of his chamber at Craigmillar; and that, till the preparations were concluded, and he was ready to step on board, the purpose was shut up in his own bosom. Let no man, therefore, (he concluded,) grudge at this proceeding, but conform to the directions I have left.[1]

These directions, notwithstanding the undignified singularity of the paper which accompanied them, were marked by prudence and good sense. The chief authority during the royal absence was committed to the Duke of Lennox, who was made President of the Privy Council. Bothwell, whose

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 377, 378-379.

turbulent disposition and power upon the Borders rendered it dangerous for him to be disobliged, was conciliated by being placed next in rank and authority to Lennox. The other councillors were, the Treasurer, Comptroller, the Lord Privy-Seal, the Captain of the Castle of Edinburgh, with the Lord Advocate and Clerk Register. A committee of noblemen was ordered to attend "in their courses," at Edinburgh, for fifteen days: the Earls of Angus and Athol, with Lords Fleming and Innermeath, to begin; and the next course to be kept by the Earls of Mar and Morton, with Lords Seton and Yester. The chief military power, as Lord-Lieutenant, was entrusted to Lord Hamilton, to be assisted in any emergency by Lords Boyd, Herries, Maxwell, Home, Cessford, and other principal barons within the marches. All conventions of the nobles were prohibited during the King's absence; and the ministers and preachers enjoined to exhort the people to obedience, and to commend their sovereign and his journey in their prayers to God.[1]

Having given these directions, the King set sail; and his insulated fit of love and chivalry met with its reward. After an initiatory gale, just sufficient to try the royal courage, the squadron reached Upsal on the fifth day, and James rode to the palace, where his *inamorata* awaited him; hurried, "booted and spurred," into her presence; and, in the rude fashion of Scotland, would have kissed her, had he not been repulsed by the offended maidenhood of Denmark.

[1] Spottiswood, p. 379.

But she was soon appeased; explanations followed; the manners of the royal bridegroom's land were comprehended; and, "after a few words privily spoken between his Majesty and her, there passed," we are told by a homely chronicler of the day, "familiarity and kisses."[1]

The marriage took place (November 23) in the Church at Upsal: the ceremony being performed by the King's favourite minister, Mr David Lindsay. Much rejoicing and banqueting, as usual, succeeded; and it appears to have required little argument in the Queen-mother to persuade her new son-in-law to eschew the dangers of a winter voyage, and convert his intended visit of twenty days into a residence of nearly six months in Denmark. This interval was passed by the King to his entire satisfaction. The time being divided between in-door revelries and pageants; out-door sports; discussions on astronomy with Tycho Brahe, whom he visited at Uranibourg; disputes with the learned Hemingius, on predestination and other points in divinity; and consultations with the Chancellor Maitland, regarding the safest method of curbing the overgrown power of his nobles, and vindicating, on his return, the authority of the Crown. In the spring he determined on his voyage home; and carrying his youthful Queen along with him, accompanied by a splendid retinue of Danish nobles and ladies,[2] arrived at Leith on the first of May, 1590. The royal pair were received, on dis-

[1] Moyse's Memoirs, Bannat. ed., p. 81.

[2] Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi. p. 51-60.

embarking, by the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, the Earl of Bothwell, and a crowd of his nobility. A Latin oration of welcome was followed by a sermon of Mr Patrick Galloway; and after divine service the King, mounting his horse, followed by his youthful bride in her chariot, drawn by eight horses gorgeously caparisoned, proceeded to the Palace of Holyrood. She was encircled by a galaxy of Danish and Scottish beauty, and attended by all the chivalry of her new dominions.

Her Coronation followed not long after, performed on a scale of unusual magnificence, and only clouded by a dispute between the King and the Kirk, on the subject of "anointing;" a ceremony represented on the side of the Puritans as Jewish, Papal, and abominably superstitious—on the other, as Christian, holy, and Catholic. The royal arguments, however, were enforced by a threat that one of the Bishops should be sent for. The dread of this worse profanation procured the admission of the lesser: the ceremony was allowed to proceed according to the King's wishes; and, to use the *naïve* expression of a contemporary, "the Countess of Mar, having taken the Queen's right arm, and opened the *craigs* of her gown, Mr Robert Bruce immediately poured forth upon those parts of her breast and arm of quhilk the clothes were removed, a bonny quantity of oil."[1]

[1] The Coronation of the Quenis Majestie, p. 53. One of the curious tracts, reprinted by Mr Gibson-Craig in his interesting volume presented to the Bannatyne Club, entitled, "Papers Relative to the Marriage of James the Sixth of Scotland.

The coronation was followed by the Queen's triumphal entry into her new capital; a ceremony conducted by the worthy merchants and burgesses, on a scale of splendour which argued increasing wealth and success in commercial enterprise. But the particulars, though curiously illustrative of manners, would fatigue by their complexity. Latin addresses were, as usual in this age, the great staple of compliment; and when the Danish Princess entered the gates, she was greeted in a classical panegyric by "Master John Russell, appointed thereto by the township;" whilst the son of the orator, "little Master John Russell," who had been artificially and wonderfully shut up in a gilded globe stuck upon the top of the gate, fluttered down in the dress of an angel, and delivered to Her Majesty the keys of the city in silver.[1]

[1] Papers Relative to the Marriage of James the Sixth, pp. 39, 40.

CHAP. II.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1590—1593.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Popes.*
Elizabeth.	Henry III. Henry IV.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Sixtus V. Urban VII. Gregory XIV. Innocent IX. Clement VIII.

THE period which James passed in Denmark was one of unusual and extraordinary tranquillity in Scotland. Previous to his departure, the King had exerted himself to conciliate Elizabeth, and many circumstances in his conduct had concurred to please this Princess. His cordial coöperation against the Spanish King,—the readiness with which he had furnished her with a body of auxiliaries, commanded by the Laird of Wemyss,—his spirit and success in putting down the rebellion of the Catholic earls, and his sending out of his dominions a body of Spanish soldiers and mariners, whose vessels (part of the once formidable Armada) had been wrecked and stranded on the northern shores of Scotland,[1]—all this had

[1] "To the number of 660 men, of whom 400 were serviceable, and the rest sick, miserable wretches."—They were shipped from

been exceedingly agreeable to the Queen of England; and she repaid it by preserving the most friendly relations during the absence of the King. Nor was the peace of the country, in this brief and happy interval, broken by the usual sanguinary baronial feuds; although, as the result fully showed, they were silenced, not eradicated. Huntly, Errol, Crawford, Maxwell, and the great body of the Roman Catholic party, had too recently experienced the weight of the royal vengeance to think of active hostility for some time; and the judicious division of power between the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, and the Earl of Bothwell, balanced by the authority committed to Angus and Athol, Mar and Morton, with other great barons, produced the best effects, and put all upon their honour and good conduct. The Kirk, too, was in a state of tranquillity—rejoicing in the recent detection and discomfiture of Roman Catholic intrigue, looking forward in calm exultation to the utter extermination of prelatical principles, and anticipating no distant triumph to what it believed to be the truth.

On the return of the King, therefore, all at first appeared tranquil; but it needed no deep discernment to detect the existence of many latent causes of disturbance. The great struggle between the principles of the Reformation and the ancient faith was lulled only, not concluded.[1] The minor, but

Leith, 25th July, 1589. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Ashby to Burghley, 28th July, 1589. Also, Ibid., same to Walsingham, 22d July, 1589.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, 16th

sometimes not less bitter contest between Prelacy and Presbyterianism, was merely suspended for a time. Amongst the nobles, the right of private war, the ties of manrent, the abuses of baronial jurisdictions, the existence of blood-feuds, which often from trifling quarrels depopulated whole districts and counties; and in the Isles, and remoter provinces of the north, the lawless and fierce habits of the petty chieftains and pirate adventurers, who assumed the state and independence of sea kings,—all these circumstances combined to threaten the public tranquillity, and to convince the King that the sky so clear on his arrival might soon be black with its wonted tempests.

Amid these elements of political strife and nascent revolution, two men were to be seen evidently destined, from their power and political position, to take the chief lead in State affairs. Both were well aware of the easy and indolent temper of the King; both had resolved to engross to themselves the supreme power in the Government: and for some years, the history of the country is little else than the conflicts of their intrigue and ambition. These were, Maitland of Thirlestane the Chancellor, James' favourite and prime minister, who had accompanied his royal master to Denmark; and Francis Stewart Earl of Bothwell, the King's near relative, and, perhaps, the most daring, powerful, and unprincipled of all the higher nobles. Maitland, born of an ancient family,

May, 1590. The Roman Catholic faction were called the "Confederates of the Brig of Dee."

but only the second son of a simple knight, (the blind poet Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington,) belonged to the body of the lesser barons; but he was connected with some of the greatest houses in the land. He had risen by his commanding talents to the highest legal office in the kingdom; and he was strong in the friendship of his Prince, and the respect of the Kirk and the great body of the middle classes —the rich burghers, merchants, and artisans. During his absence in Denmark with his royal master, they had held many grave consultations on the broken, disjointed, and miserable state of his kingdom. The extreme poverty of the Crown, the insolence and intolerable oppressions of the higher barons, who, strong in their hereditary power, dictated to the monarch on all the affairs of his Government, thrust themselves uncalled-for into his Councils, attended or absented themselves from Court at their pleasure, and derided alike the command of their Prince or the decisions of the laws;—all this was pointed out by the Chancellor to the King, and the absolute necessity of some speedy and efficient reformation insisted on. It was time, he said, that the monarch, who was now in the prime of his years and vigour, allied by marriage to a powerful Prince, the heir of a mighty kingdom, and able, from his position, to take a leading part in European politics, should no longer be bearded by every baron who chose to consider himself as a born councillor of the realm. It was time that those illegal coalitions of the nobles, whose object it had so often been to seize

the King's person, and compel him into an approval of all their atrocious designs, should be broken up, and for the future rendered impossible. To effect this, the Crown must strengthen itself in every possible way: it must support its judges and officers in the execution of their duty against baronial oppression and insolence; it must increase its revenues by a prudent economy and retrenchment of the superfluous offices in the royal household; it must save its escheats, its wardships, its fines, its rentals, and all the sources of its wealth, to form a fund for all emergencies, but especially for the support of a body of waged troops, who, by their constant readiness for service, and superior discipline, might overawe the nobles and their vassals. To effect this, would require some sacrifices on the part of the Prince. Amongst these, a more rigid and practical attention to business, a correction of the mischievous habit of granting every petition without inquiry, and a resolution to hold himself more distant and dignified to his nobility, were absolutely necessary; but if ready to consent to these, it would not, he said, be difficult to effect a thorough reformation; and he the Chancellor, for his part, was ready to back the King to the utmost of his power to accomplish it. To this end, he represented to James the wisdom of keeping up the present friendly relations with England, and the necessity of watching the motions of Huntly and the Roman Catholic party, who, though apparently subdued and silent, were still powerful in the kingdom, busy in their intrigues with Spain, and ready to seize any oppor-

tunity for a new effort.[1] Nor was there any reason why this large and powerful body of men should despair of success, but rather the contrary. Ample proof of this may be found in a remarkable paper in the hand of Lord Burghley, written shortly before James' arrival from Denmark, and drawn up apparently for his own guidance, which brings forward, in clear contrast, the comparative strength of the Catholic and Protestant parties in Scotland. From it we learn, that all the northern part of the kingdom, including the counties of Inverness, Caithness, Sutherland, and Aberdeen, with Moray, and the Sheriffdoms of Buchan, of Angus, of Wigtown, and of Nithsdale, were either wholly, or for the greater part, in the interest of the Roman Catholic party, commanded mostly by noblemen who secretly adhered to that faith, and directed in their movements by Jesuits and Priests, who were concealed in various parts of the country, especially in Angus. On the other hand, the counties of Perth and Stirling, the populous shire of Fife, and the counties of Lanark, Dumbarton, and Renfrew, including the rich district of Clydesdale, were, with few exceptions, Protestant; whilst the counties of Ayr and Linlithgow were dubious, and could not be truly ranged either on one side or the other.[2] Are we to be surprised that, in a country thus divided, and with a Prince so little able to adopt a

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Sir R. Bowes to Lord Burghley, 16th May, 1590.

[2] MS. St. P. Off. Names of the Towns and Noblemen in Scotland, and how they are Affected. 1589.

firm and determined line of policy as James then was, the struggle between the two parties should long be kept up with increasing obstinacy and asperity? But it is necessary to leave these general remarks and resume our narrative.

In the end of May, the Danish commissioners and nobles, who had accompanied their young Princess to Scotland, took leave of the Scottish monarch, and returned to Denmark. It had been arranged between James and his chief minister Maitland, that no attempt at reformation should be made till these strangers had left the country; but scarcely had they embarked, when the King exhibited an unusual courage and activity, by making an effort to seize, with his own hand, the Laird of Niddry, a baron who had been guilty of a foul murder, and was protected by Bothwell. This energy, although unsuccessful at the moment, (for the culprit, receiving warning, escaped,) had a good effect in convincing the country that he was in earnest; and about the same time the strictest regulations as to audience were enforced at the palace. Of this an instance occurred soon after, which made some noise. Lord Hamilton, the first nobleman in the country, and heir-apparent to the throne, sought, as usual, to enter the King's presence-chamber, but was stopped at the door by Sandilands, one of the royal suite, who told him the King was quiet, and would see no one. "I was sent for," said Hamilton; "I am ready to serve my Prince, and thought to have access freely as I was wont; but you may tell the King, that this new order will

offend more than me." He then left the palace in a high fume, and would have ridden home had he not been better advised. James afterwards good humouredly appeased him; observing, that it ill became the heir-apparent to be angry with the *old laird*, meaning himself. Bowes, however, who was at Court, and told the anecdote to Burghley, observed, that such new restrictions gave deep offence in Scotland, and caused much murmuring with a proud noblity long accustomed to have the freest access to their sovereign.[1]

Such discontent, however small in its beginning, soon spread widely; and unknown evils and reforms being generally magnified in anticipation, the King's intentions created an alarm, which showed itself in a coalition between those who hitherto had been in constant and bitter collision—the Catholic faction, known by the name of the Confederates of the Brig of Dee, and the Protestant associates of the Enterprise at Stirling. The Earls of Huntly, Errol, Bothwell, and Montrose, began to league together; and James had at first resolved to attempt a stroke of State policy, by committing them to ward, bringing them to trial for their former offences, and at once destroying so dangerous a combination. But the attempt was deemed too hazardous; and it was judged more prudent to temporize, and keep up the two factions, balancing the one against the other.[2]

A Convention of the nobles was appointed to be held early in June. "The King, (said Bowes to

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 23d May, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.
[2] Ibid.

Burghley, alluding to his projected improvements,) according to his public promise in Edinburgh, and solemn protestations to some noblemen, ministers, and well-affected, is resolved to reform his house, Council, and Sessions, and to banish all Jesuits and Papists. He purposeth, further, to resume into his hands sundry of his own possessions now in the holding of others. To advance his revenues with some portions of ecclesiastical livings, and to draw to due obedience all persons attainted at horn, excommunicated, or otherwise disobedient. In the execution of which things," continued the Ambassador, "he will find no little difficulty: for I have heard that many intend to seek to defeat and stay the King's course herein; and that sundry of the Sessions will stand in law to hold their places, notwithstanding any charge to be given to avoid them."[1]

James, for some time, was active and serious in these reforms. His household was greatly reduced in its expenditure. After a general dismissal of officers, which occasioned many murmurs, the gentlemen personally attendant on royalty were cut down from thirty to four, with two pages; and the monarch drew up, in his own hand, some principal matters relative to domestic and foreign policy, upon which he required the immediate advice of his Privy Council. They must consider, he said, the state of the strengths and munitions, and the necessary provision to be made for the defence of the kingdom, in case of foreign invasion; the treaties required to be entered

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 31st May, 1590, Bowes to Burghley.

into, for the preservation of foreign amity; the best measures to be adopted for the procuring secret foreign intelligence; the "griefs of the nobility and people, as well against the King as the government of his councillors; the necessity of a rigid investigation into the true state of the realm;" the "ettling"[1] and disposition of the nobility, and other persons of power and credit: they must discover who were well affected to the true religion, who carried away by the persuasion of Jesuits and Papists; what was the best medicine to cure diversities in religion, and heal the bloody wounds occasioned by feuds and family quarrels; what were the true causes of the decay of the rents of the Crown; and lastly, they must point out the best method to enforce obedience to the acts of the last Parliament, and declare what properly belonged to every office of the estate. Such were the grave and weighty matters which the King now brought before his Council.[2]

But these were not all: the monarch had resolved to exert his utmost efforts to heal the wounds, not of Scotland only, but of Europe, by establishing a peace between England and Spain. To effect this, he despatched Colonel Stewart and Sir John Skene on a mission to the Princes of Germany, to persuade the Palsgrave, the Duke of Saxony, the Marquess of Brandenburg, and the rest of these potentates, of the absolute

[1] The "ettling," the "aim." To ettle, to aim. The aim and leading objects of the nobles.

[2] MS. St. P. Off. Heads for our Privy Council, May, 1590. Set down by the King of Scots.

necessity of interfering between these two mighty powers; and to recommend them to send ambassadors to England, France, and Spain, who might remonstrate on the miserable consequences of the continuance of the war. If Spain were obstinate, a general league was to be concluded amongst the Princes for the preservation of "the common cause of true religion, and their ports were to be shut against Philip till he was reduced to reason."[1]

These great designs the King communicated to Elizabeth by Sir John Carmichael, whom he sent to the English Court with a copy of the Instructions furnished to his German ambassadors; and, as his exchequer was at this time utterly impoverished, he requested that Princess to lend him sufficient to defray the expenses of their voyage; declaring his readiness, in return, to place upon his Privy Council any nobleman whom she recommended, and to exert his utmost strength in crushing the Roman Catholic faction, who were renewing their intrigues with Spain.[2] The "Band" or Covenant, which united Huntly, Errol, and their associates, in their recent treasonable enterprise, had been traced to the hands of the Laird of Auchendown, and Maitland the Chancellor insisted on its being produced; assuring Elizabeth, with whom he was then in great favour, that the association should be broken up or Huntly wrecked for ever.[3]

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Bowes to Burghley, 4th June, 1590.
[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 9th June, 1590.
[3] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 4th June, 1590. It was about this time that Bowes placed in James' hands a letter

To confirm the monarch in such good purposes, the Queen of England sent him the Garter by the Earl of Worcester, who arrived in Edinburgh during the sitting of that Convention from which such important reformations were to have proceeded. James accepted the Queen's presents and letter in excellent part; congratulated himself on having so worthy a knight-companion as the French King, (Henry had just been chosen a knight of the order;) and held some merry talk with Worcester on the cause of the Scottish Queen's invisibility, her Majesty being then in the family way, and pretending it was only the toothache.[1] But, on proceeding from these lighter subjects to speak of the intended reformations, it was evident, even to the superficial observation of a stranger like Worcester, that the course of improvements would be beset with difficulties. When reformation of justice was debated, the Lords of Session professed, indeed, the utmost readiness to amend all; and two of their

writ by her Majesty's own hand. It alluded to his great design for the reëstablishment of peace; and was more free from the involution and pedantry which mark her private letters than many of her epistles. It assured him that she was happy to find him so grateful a King, that she highly approved of his purpose, and that nothing could equal the careful thoughts for him and his realm which had occupied her since his peregrination. "And so," said she, "I leave scribbling, but never end to love you and assist you with my friendship, care, and prayer to the living God to send you all prosperous success, and his Holy Spirit for guide."[1]

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Earl of Worcester to Burghley, Edinburgh, 15th June, 1590.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Royal Letters, Scotland. Elizabeth to James,

number, Mr David Mackgill and Mr John Graham, indulged very freely and bitterly in mutual accusations of bribery and corruption; but the rest pleaded their privilege, granted by Act of Parliament, to "try themselves." With regard to the Kirk, when its leaders insisted that every parish should be provided with a minister, and every minister with a stipend, no objection was made by the nobles to the proposal, in general; but "the possessors of the Church lands declared their determination not to surrender any portion of their tacks and leases unless the remainder should be secured to them in fee-simple for ever."[1]

In the end, however, some points were gained, which pleased both James and the English Queen, who now acted together with much cordiality. The choice of the King's Secret Council was left to his own will, and Elizabeth knew she would be chiefly consulted. The monarch, strengthened by the approval of the wisest sort, led by the Chancellor, held the Roman Catholic faction in awe; restrained the insolence of Bothwell; insisted on the appearance and delivery of all "at the horn," who had hitherto defied the law; took steps for the speedy and amicable settlement of all Border causes; adopted measures to amend the coin which had been much debased; and, whilst he continued his favour towards the Kirk, did not scruple to silence some of the wilder sort of the brethren who, in their public sermons, had attacked the Queen of England for her recent

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Worcester to Burghley, 15th June, 1590.

severity to the English Puritans. On this last subject, the excesses of the Puritans, Elizabeth felt keenly; and her far-sighted glance had already detected the dangers of a sect then only in their infancy, but professing principles which she deemed inconsistent with the safety of any well-governed State. Worcester had received pointed instructions in the matter;[1] and the Queen herself, when she dismissed Sir John Carmichael the Scottish Ambassador, enforced her wishes in a private letter to James, which is too characteristic to be omitted. It is as follows:—

"Greater promises, more affection, and grants of more acknowledgings of received good turns, my dear brother, none can better remember than this gentleman, by your charge, hath made me understand; whereby I think all my endeavours well recompensed, that see them so well acknowledged; and do trust that my counsels, if they so much content you, will serve for memorials to turn your actions to serve the turn of your safe government, and make the lookers-on honour your worth, and reverence such a ruler.

"And lest fair semblances, that easily may beguile, do not breed your ignorance of such persons as either pretend religion or dissemble devotion, let me warn you that there is risen, both in your realm and mine, a sect of perilous consequence, such as would have no Kings, but a presbytery; and take our place, while they enjoy our privilege, with a shade of God's Word, which none is judged to follow right, without by

[1] MS. St. P. Off., 1590. Memorial of sundry things moved to the King of Scots by the Ambassador of England.

their censure they be so deemed. Yea, look we well unto them. When they have made in our people's hearts a doubt of our religion—and that we err, if they say so—what perilous issue this may make I rather think than mind to write. *Sapienti pauca.* I pray you stop the mouths, or make shorter the tongues of such ministers as dare presume to make *oraisons* in their pulpits for the persecuted in England for the gospel. Suppose you, my dear brother, that I can tolerate such scandals of my sincere government? No: I hope, however you be pleased to bear with their audacity towards yourself, yet you will not suffer a strange king receive that indignity at such caterpillers' hands, that instead of fruit I am afraid will stuff your realm with venom: of this I have particularized more to this bearer, together with other answers to his charge; beseeching you to hear them, and not to give more harbour to vagabond traitors and seditious inventors, but to return them to me, or banish them your land. And thus, with my many thanks for your honourable entertainment of my ambassador, [she means here the Earl of Worcester,] I commit you to God; who ever preserve you from all evil counsels, and send you grace to follow the best!"[1] To these wishes of Elizabeth both James and his Prime Minister, the Chancellor Maitland, responded with the utmost readiness. Indeed, the Qeeen could scarcely resent the excesses

[1] MS. St. P. Off. Royal Letters. Copy of the time, indorsed 6th July, 1590. Copy of her Majestie's letter, written to the King of Scots, with her own hand, and sent by Sir John Carmichael.

of the Puritan clergy more violently than her brother Prince; although, from their influence over the people, he was compelled sometimes to temporize. The ministers, accordingly, were commanded to forbear prayer in their sermons for the persecuted in England;[1] and equal activity was shown against the intrigues of the Spaniards and the Catholic faction. When O'Rourke, an Irish chieftain, was detected in Glasgow, secretly beating up for recruits against the English, the King of Scots scrupled not to have him seized and delivered to Elizabeth. "I would to God," said he, writing to the queen, "your greatest enemies were in my hands; if it were the King of Spain himself, he should not be long undelivered to you: for that course have I taken me to, and will profess it till I die, that all your foes shall be common enemies to us both, in spite of the Pope, the King of Spain, and all the leaguers, my cousins not excepted, and the devil their master."[2]

In return for this devotion to her wishes, Elizabeth, forgetting her economy, transmitted, at various intervals, large sums to the King, complimented the young Queen with presents, and flattered her by letters; whilst the Chancellor, who had now consolidated his power, and could bid defiance to his opponents, entered into a cordial correspondence with Burghley. He reminded him of the "old familiar

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 14th August, 1590.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Royal Letters. Indorsed, The King of Scots' letter to the Queen's Majesty, by Roger Ashton, 22d March, 1590-1.

acquaintance and strict amity" which had subsisted between him and his late brother, the well-known Lethington; and declared his readiness and anxiety to show himself worthy of the Lord Treasurer's friendly dealing and gentle messages sent recently by Carmichael. Speaking modestly of his own inferiority, he yet hoped that their mutual exertions would be followed by the best effects. "If," said he, "this microcosme of Britain, separate from the Continent world, naturally joined in situation and language, and, most happily, by religion, shall be, by the indissoluble amity of the two princes, sincerely conserved in union, the Antichristian confederates shall never be able to effect their bloody and godless measures." In conclusion, he promised, that whilst Burghley, by his large experience and wisdom, held the Roman Catholic party in check, to "the benefit of all sincerely professing Christ in Europe," he would himself keep a watchful eye over their proceedings in Scotland;[1] and so rigidly did he fulfil this, that, before the end of the year, watchfulness was turned into persecution, and the Catholics in vain petitioned for liberty of conscience, and pleaded the cruelty of being compelled to subscribe the Protestant Articles of religion.[2] Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that their intrigues with Spain and the Continent should have continued; and that, although Bowes, the Ambas-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Thirlstane to the Lord High Treasurer, 13th August, 1590.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 7th Nov., 1590.

sador, informed Burghley that the state of Scotland had been brought to great quietness, it was that deceitful calm which not unfrequently precedes the tempest.[1]

For a while, however, all went on smoothly; and the King found leisure to become exceedingly active and agitated upon a subject which forms a melancholy and mysterious chapter in the history of the human mind—that of witchcraft. That many unfortunate and miserable beings, driven by poverty and want, by suspicion and persecution, by the desire of vengeance, the love of power, or a daring curiosity after forbidden knowledge, had renounced their baptismal vows, and entered, as they believed, into a compact with the author of all evil, cannot be doubted. The difficulty is, to discover whether they were the victims of their own imagination, the dupes of impostors, or, which is not to be rejected as impossible or incredible, the subjects and recipients of diabolic influence and agency. During the summer of this year, the young Laird of Wardhouse had been seized with a mortal sickness which had carried him to the grave; and it was discovered that several witches had formed his image in wax, which, having "roasted at a slow fire, the gentleman," it was said, "pined away insensibly, but surely, till he died."[2] This was alarming enough; but in the winter still darker deeds came to light, involving higher culprits

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 23d July, 1590.

and more daring transactions. Agnes Sampson, a woman, as Spottiswood says, "not of the base or ignorant sort of witches, but matronlike, grave, and settled in her answers," accused Bothwell of consulting her as to the probable continuance of the King's life; and Richard Graham, a notorious sorcerer, averred that the Earl had sought him on the same errand. Agnes declared, when questioned by the judges, that "she had a familiar spirit, who upon her call, appeared in a visible form, and resolved her of any doubtful matters, especially concerning life and death. The mode in which she summoned him was by calling out "Holla, Master!" an invocation which he had taught her himself. She added, that he had undertaken to make away with the King, but had failed; pronouncing him, (when challenged by her for his want of success,) to be invulnerable to his incantations, and muttering, in a language which she did not understand, but which turned out to be respectable French, "*Il est homme de Dieu.*"[1] Of James' labours with this miserable woman, who was condemned and burnt, Bowes wrote to Burghley. The King, he said, by his own especial travel, had drawn Sampson, the great witch, to confess plainly her wicked estate and doings, and to discover sundry things touching his own life; how the witches sought to have had his shirt, or other linen about him, for the execution of their charms. In these doings the Lord Claud's name was implicated, and sundry other noble

[1] Spottiswood, p. 383.

personages evil spoken of. The number of the witches known, were (he added) about thirty; but many others were accused of acts filthy, lewd, and fantastical.[1] On a future occasion, the royal curiosity and acuteness were rewarded by the discovery of more particulars involving the guilt of Bothwell. They came out in an examination to which James subjected the wizard Richard Graham, who, upon some hope held out of pardon, confessed that Bothwell sought to draw him to devise some means to hasten the King's death, alleging that he was driven to this to avoid his own; since a necromancer in Italy had predicted to him that he should become great in power and temporal possession, kill two men, fall into trouble with the King for two capital crimes, be pardoned for the first and suffer for the second. The three first events, he averred, had taken place as foretold him: he had become a mighty baron, had killed Sir William Stewart, and *Davie the Devil*, meaning David Hume of Manderston; been once pardoned; and now he or the King must go. Graham agreed to assist him; and James had the satisfaction of hearing some particulars of the incantation. An image of the royal person was formed of wax, and hung up between a *tod* or fox, over which some spells had been muttered, and the head of a young calf, newly killed. It was added that all this was well known to Jely Duncan, who is described by Bowes as a kind of whipper-in to the witches, being accus-

1 MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 7th Dec., 1590.

tomed to scour the country and collect together all the Satanic fraternity and sisterhood. But although she admitted, at first, their dealings with Bothwell, she afterwards denied all; and, as these unfortunate wretches were so severely tortured that one of them died under the rack, it is impossible to receive their evidence without the utmost suspicion.[1] Bothwell, however, amid loud asseverations of innocence, was seized and sent to prison, and an early Convention of the Estates called for his trial. But the evidence, by the King's own admission, was slender; the nobles seemed unwilling to countenance any violent proceedings against him; and the matter was so long delayed, that his fierce temper would endure confinement no longer; and breaking his prison, he buried himself amongst his friends and fastnesses in the Borders.[2]

This result greatly irritated the King, who consoled himself by bringing to trial one of the leading witches, named Barbara Napier, a woman well connected, and of whose conviction he entertained no doubt. To his astonishment, the jury did not conceive the evidence sufficient, and acquitted her. The verdict threw James into the greatest rage; yet it was difficult to know what was now to be done. An assize of error, as it was called, was a proceeding known and practised by the law of England, but it had never been introduced into Scotland; nor had it been heard of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 15th April, 1591.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 5th May, 1591. Also, Ibid., same to same, 22d June, 1591.

for centuries, that the King should sit in person as a judge in any criminal matter. James, however, shut his eyes to all difficulties, and determined to bring the refractory jurors to justice.[1] Accordingly, on the 7th of June, repairing from Falkland, he sat in person on the trial of the delinquents. All of them pleaded guilty, and put themselves, as it was then termed, in the King's will, so that there was little scope given to the exercise of regal acuteness. He made an oration, however, some sentences of which give a good picture of the style of his oratory; often pedantic and tedious, but not unfrequently epigrammatic and sententious. Alluding to the shocking state of the country and the prevalence of crimes, "I must advertise you," said he, "what it is that makes great crimes to be so rife in this country; namely, that all men set themselves more for friend than for justice and obedience to the laws. This corruption here *bairns suck at the pap;* and let a man commit the most filthy crimes that can be, yet his friends take his part; and first keep him from apprehension, and after, by fead or favor, by false assize, or some way or other, they find moyen of his escape. The experience hereof we have in Niddry. I will not speak how I am charged with this fault in court and choir, from prince and pulpit; yet this I say, that howsoever matters have gone against my will, I am innocent of all injustice in these behalfs. My con-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 9th May, 1591. Ibid., same to same, 21st May.

science doth set me clear, as did the conscience of Samuel; and I call you to be judges herein. And suppose I be your King, yet I submit myself to the accusations of you, my subjects, in this behalf; and let any one say what I have done. And as I have this begun, so purpose I to go forward; not because I am James Stuard, and can command so many thousands of men, but because God hath made me a King and judge, to judge righteous judgment.

"For witchcraft, which is a thing grown very common among us, I know it to be a most abominable sin; and I have been occupied these three quarters of a year for the sifting out of them that are guilty herein. We are taught by the laws, both of God and man, that this sin is most odious; and by God's law punishable by death. By man's law it is called *Maleficium* or *Veneficium*, an ill deed, or a poisonable deed, and punishable likewise by death. Now, if it be death as practised against any of the people, I must needs think it to be (at least) the like if it be against the King. Not that I fear death; for I thank God I dare in a good cause abide hazard." * * "As for them," he concluded, "who think these witchcrafts to be but fantasies, I remit them to be catechised and instructed in these most evident points."[1]

James, perhaps, felt somewhat doubtful upon the subject of his personal courage, and was aware

[1] MS. St. P. Off. The inquest which first went upon Barbara Nep., called before the King in the Tolbooth, 7th June, 1591.

that his subjects shared in his apprehensions; but he was little aware how soon his courage and determination were to be put to the test, by the frightful state of the country and the frequent attacks upon the royal person. So, however, it happened Between private feuds, the continuance of Catholic intrigues, the active and indignant counter-movements of the Kirk, and the open rebellion of Bothwell, whose power and reckless bravery made him formidable to all parties, the whole land was thrown into a deplorable state of tumult and insecurity. In the Highlands, the Earl of Huntly and the Earl of Murray, two of the greatest houses in the North, engaged in a deadly quarrel, which drew in the lairds of Grant, Calder, Macintosh, and others, and made the fairest districts a prey to indiscriminate havoc and murder.[1] At Court all was commotion and apprehension from the rivalry of the Master of Glammis, who began to be a favourite of the King, and Chancellor Thirlstane, who would brook no rival in power.[2] On the Borders, Bothwell welcomed every broken man and cruel murderer who chose to ride under his banner. Some time previous to the trials of the witches, this daring chief had invaded the Supreme Court, and carried off a witness from the bar, who was about to give evidence against one of his retainers, whilst the King, although in the next room, did not dare to interfere.[3] After his

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 7th Dec., 1590. Ibid., Lord Thirlstane to Burghley, 7th Dec., 1590.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 20th Nov., 1590.

[3] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 25th Jan., 1590-1.

escape and triumph, his fierce temper impelled him to still greater excesses; and attacking the Palace of Holyrood at the head of his desperate followers, he had nearly surprised and made prisoners both the King and the Chancellor. Douglas of Spot, however, one of the principal leaders in this attack, lost time, by attempting to set at liberty some of his men who were imprisoned in the Palace. An alarm was given: the King took refuge in one of the turrets; the Chancellor barricaded his room, and bravely beat off the assailants; whilst the citizens of Edinburgh, headed by their Provost, rushed into the outer court of the Palace, and cutting their way through the outer ranks of the Borderers, compelled Bothwell to a precipitate flight.[1] He soon, however, became as formidable as ever; entered into a secret correspondence with England; leagued with the Duke of Lennox, who had quarrelled with Thirlstane; procured the countenance of the Kirk, by professing the most determined hostility to Huntly and the Catholic faction; and flattered himself, not without good grounds, that his next attack would be successful.

Meanwhile a tragedy occurred, which, even in that age, familiar with scenes of feudal atrocity, occasioned unusual horror. The reader may perhaps remember the utter destruction brought by the Regent Murray upon the great Earl of Huntly; his execution, and that of one of his sons, the forfeiture of his immense

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Roger Ashton to Bowes, 28th Dec., 1591. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 31st Dec., 1591.

estates, and the almost entire overthrow of his house.[1] It was now thirty years since that miserable event: the favour of the King had restored the family of Gordon to its estates and its honours, and Huntly's ambition might have been satisfied; but the deep principle of feudal vengeance demanded blood for blood; and there was not a retainer of the house of Huntly, from the belted knight that sat at his master's right hand to the serving-man behind his chair, who did not acknowledge the sacred necessity of revenge. Time, which softens or dilutes most feelings, only added intensity to this; and now when the hour of repayment was come, the debt was exacted with fearful interest. The then Earl of Murray, a Stewart, and representative of the famous Regent, was one of the bravest and handsomest men of his time; a favourite at Court, and dear to the people and the Kirk, who still looked fondly back to the days of his great ancestor. In deeds of arms and personal prowess, an old chronicle describes him as a sort of Amadis; "comely, gentle, brave, and of a great stature and strength of body."[2] This young nobleman had princely possessions in the North, and for some years deadly feud had raged between him and Huntly; but Lord Ochiltree, a Stewart, a firm friend of Murray's, was at this time exerting himself to bring about an agreement between the two barons; and had so far succeeded, that Murray, with a slender retinue, left

[1] See supra, vol. vi. p. 308-313.

[2] Historie of James the Sext, p. 246.

his northern fastnesses, and came to his mother's castle of Dunibristle, a short distance from the Queensferry. Huntly, his enemy, was then at Court in constant attendance upon the King; and Ochiltree, who had communicated with him, and informed him of Murray's wishes for a reconciliation, took horse and rode to Queensferry, intending to pass to Dunibristle and arrange an amicable meeting between the rival Earls. To his surprise, he found that a royal order had been sent, interdicting any boats from plying that day between Fife and the opposite coast. But little suspicion was occasioned: he believed it some measure connected with the hot pursuit then going on against Bothwell, and was satisfied to abandon his journey to Dunibristle. This proved the destruction of his poor friend. That very day, the 7th of February, the King hunted; and Huntly, giving out that he meant to accompany the royal cavalcade, assembled his followers to the number of forty horse. Suddenly he pretended that certain news had reached him of the retreat of Bothwell; extorted from the King permission to ride against this traitor; and passing the ferry, beset the house of Dunibristle, and summoned Murray to surrender. This was refused; and, in spite of the great disparity in numbers, the Stewarts resisted till nightfall, when Huntly, collecting the corn-stacks, or ricks, in the neighbouring fields, piled them up against the walls, commanded the house to be set on fire, and compelled its unhappy inmates to make a desperate sally that they might escape being burnt alive. In this outbreak the

Sheriff of Murray was slain; but the young Earl, aided by his great stature and strength, rushed forth all burned and blackened, with his long and beautiful tresses on fire and streaming behind him, threw himself with iresistible fury on his assailants, broke through the toils like a lion,[1] and escaped by speed of foot to the sea shore. Here, unfortunately, his hair and the silken plume of his helmet blazed through the darkness; and his fell pursuers, tracing him by the trail of light, ran him into a cave, where they cruelly murdered him. His mortal wound, it was said, was given by Gordon of Buckie, who, with the ferocity of the times, seeing Huntly drawing back, cursed him as afraid to go as far as his followers, and called upon him to stab his fallen enemy with his dagger, and become art and part of the slaughter, as he had been of the conspiracy. Huntly, thus threatened, struck the dying man in the face with his weapon, who, with a bitter smile, upbraided him "with having spoilt a better face than his own."[2]

The outcry against this atrocious murder was deep and universal. Ochiltree, who had been deceived by Huntly and the Chancellor, became loud in his clamours for revenge. In the North, Lord Forbes, an attached friend of Murray, carried his bloody shirt on a spear's head; and marching with the ghastly banner through his territories, incited his

[1] The simile is Ashton's, in a letter to Bowes.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Roger Ashton to Bowes, 8th Feb., 1591-2. Also, Ibid., same to same, 9th Feb., 1591-2.

followers to revenge. In the capital, the Lady Doune, mother of the murdered Earl, who with her daughters had narrowly escaped death at Dunibristle, exhibited the mangled corpses of her son and his faithful follower the Sheriff of Murray in the church at Leith; and Huntly, followed everywhere by a yell of public execration, fled first to Ravensheugh, a castle of Sinclair Baron of Roslin, and afterwards to his own country in the North.

Amid all this tumult and ardent demands for instant justice and vengeance, the King exhibited such indifference, that strange suspicions arose, not only against James, but his great adviser the Chancellor, between whom and Huntly there had arisen, for some time before Murray's murder, a suspicious familiarity. Huntly pleaded a royal commission for everything he had done. It was known that the King had been deeply incensed against Murray by a report that he had abetted Bothwell in his late attempt, and had even been seen with him in the palace on the night of the attack. It was remembered that Ochiltree had been prevented, as was alleged, by a royal order sent through the Chancellor, from passing the ferry on the day of the murder; and the gossip of the Court went even so far as to say, that the young Queen's favour for Murray had roused the royal jealousy. All this was confirmed, as may well be believed, when Huntly, being summoned to deliver himself up and take his trial, obeyed with alacrity; entered into ward in Blackness castle; and after a

trifling investigation was dismissed and pardoned.[1] Against this gross partiality, Ochiltree, Lennox, Athol, and the whole friends of the murdered lord, loudly remonstrated. Bothwell, a Stewart, and cousin-german to Murray, availing himself of this favourable contingency, united his whole strength with theirs. The Kirk, indignant at the King's favour for Huntly, the head of the Roman Catholics, threw all its weight into the same scale; and James soon found that Murray's death, slightly as he regarded it at first, drew after it fatal and alarming effects. In the North, the Earl of Athol, with the Lairds of Macintosh, Grant, Lovat, and their followers, carried fire and sword into Huntly's country, and kindled throughout that region innumerable lesser feuds and quarrels, which, like the moor-burning of their own savage districts, spread from glen to glen, and mountain to mountain, till half the land seemed in a blaze.[2] In the South, the Chancellor Maitland was no longer able to guide the Government with his usual steady and determined hand. Hitherto he had defied all Court storms, and made a bold head against his enemies; but his implication as a conspirator with Huntly in the murder of Murray, at first only suspected, but now, from some recent discoveries, absolutely certain, raised against him a universal detesta-

[1] Historie of James the Sext, p. 248.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 98. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 1st Jan. 1592-3. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 21st Nov., 1592.

tion; the hatred of the people added new strength to his opponents, and he was driven from Court.[1]

This retreat of his chief adviser weakened James. Elizabeth's coldness also annoyed him; and his uneasiness was changed into indignation, when he discovered that she looked favourably upon Bothwell; and that this traitorous subject, who had so lately invaded and dishonoured him, was in correspondence with her ministers. It was necessary, however, to dissemble his feelings, as the difficulties which now surrounded him were of a complicated kind. It had recently been his policy to balance the two great factions which divided the country, the Catholic and Protestant, as equally as possible: so that into whichever scale he threw the weight of his own authority it might preponderate. This mode of government, borrowed from Elizabeth, was more difficult to be carried through with success in Scotland than in the neighbouring country, not only from the superiority in vigour and intellect possessed by that Princess over James, but from the greater feudal strength of the nobility of Scotland, and the greater weakness of the royal prerogative in that kingdom. In England various causes had concurred to destroy the greater barons; the wars of the two Roses were especially fatal to them; and it is well known that the reign of Henry the Eighth had been the grave of many of those potent families who, before that time, were in the habit of dictating to the Crown. But

[1] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 97. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 17th Dec., 1592.

in Scotland not only were the feudal prerogatives more large, but the arm of the law was weaker; and the great houses, such as Hamilton, Argyll, Mar, Huntly, Douglas, and Stewart, were fresh and in vigour. Of all this the King was so well aware, that when Bowes the English Ambassador on one occasion complained to him, that his reforms were ever *in fieri* not *in posse*, James answered, that to reform such nobles as he had, would require the lives of three Kings.[1]

There can be no doubt, however, that James, although clearly foreseeing the difficulties he was likely to encounter, had determined to weaken and suppress, as far as possible, the greater barons; and had resolved, by every means in his power, to strengthen the Crown, raise up the middle classes and the lesser barons; and so balance and equalize the various powers of the constitution, that he should be able to hold the reins with a firm hand. There is a passage of a letter of Hudson's, one of the King's favourites, and a gentleman of his Court, which points to this, and shows that, although James greatly favoured the Chancellor, he was more his own minister than has been believed. Elizabeth, it appears, alarmed by some recent favours shown to Huntly, had instructed Hudson to gain this high officer, hoping through him to influence the King; to which Hudson replied to Burghley, that the common opinion that James followed Maitland's guidance was an error; that the King was "himself the very centre of the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 25th Jan., 1590-1.

Government, and moved the Chancellor and all the rest as he turned, minions and all. Although (he continued) he bestow favour in great measure upon sundries, it doth not follow that he is directed by them. The Chancellor is a great councillor, and the King seeth that his gifts merit his place; but he followeth directly his Majesty's course in all."[1]

Acting along with this able minister, James had hitherto been able to hold in check the power of the higher nobles, and to keep the country in something like tranquillity. But the murder of Murray, the implication of the Chancellor and suspected connivance of the King in this foul transaction; the compulsory retirement of Maitland, and the formidable combination which had taken place between the majority of the higher nobles and the Earl of Bothwell, threw the monarch into alarm, and forced him upon some measures which, under other circumstances, he would scarcely have adopted. His late favour to Huntly had damaged him in the affections of the Kirk: he now resolved to court its aid and to flatter it by unwonted concessions. These it is important to notice, as they led to no less a measure than the establishment of Presbytery by a Prince to whom this form of ecclesiastical government appears to have been especially obnoxious. The acts passed in the parliament 1584, against the discipline and privileges of the Kirk, had long been a thorn in the side of the ministers; and they now, in an Assembly held some time previous to the meeting of Parliament, resolved

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Hudson to Burghley, 7th Dec., 1591.

to petition the King, not only for the abolition of these obnoxious statutes, but for a solemn legislative establishment of the Presbyterian system of church government.

Accordingly, Parliament having assembled in June 1592, the Assembly presented the four following articles or requests to the King:—

1. That the acts of Parliament made in the year 1584 against the discipline and liberty of the Kirk, should be repealed, and the present discipline be ratified.

2. That the act of Annexation should be abolished, and the patrimony of the Kirk restored.

3. That Abbots, Priors, and other Prelates pretending to ecclesiastical authority, and giving their vote in matters without any delegated power from the Kirk, should not be hereafter permitted to vote in Parliament or other Convention; and lastly,

4. That the land, which was polluted by fearful idolatry and bloodshed, should be purged.[1]

The first article, which went to rescind the acts of 1584, was long and keenly debated: for James was acute enough to detect the increased power which this must give to the ministers; and it is certain that no change had taken place in the mind of the monarch as to the dangers to be apprehended from the turbulence and independence of these bold and able men. The republican principles, the austere morality, and the extreme pulpit license of the Kirk, were

[1] Calderwood, pp. 267, 268.

wholly opposed to all his ideas of ecclesiastical polity or civil government; but Maitland, who had now resumed his influence, though still absent from Court, was solicitous to conciliate the friends of the murdered Murray, and to appease the people; and assisting the Kirk at this moment with the full weight of his influence and advice, the King, more from policy than affection, assented to the proposal. An act, accordingly, was passed, which is still regarded as the "Charter of the Liberties of the Kirk."

It ratified its system of government by General Assemblies, provincial Synods, Presbyteries, and particular Sessions. It affirmed such courts, with the jurisdiction and discipline belonging to them, to be just, good, and godly; defined their powers, appointed the time and manner of their meeting, and declared that the acts passed in 1584 should be in no ways prejudicial to the privileges of the office-bearers in the Kirk in determining heads of religion, matters of heresy, questions of excommunication, appointment and deprivation of ministers; that another act of the same Parliament granting commissions to Bishops to receive the royal presentations to bishoprics, and to give collation, should be rescinded; and that all presentations should be directed to their particular presbyteries, with full power to give collation and decide all ecclesiastical causes within their bounds, under the proviso that they admitted such ministers as were presented by the King or other lay patrons.[1]

[1] M'Crie's Life of Melvil, p. 403. Aikman's Translation of

Had the Kirk contented itself with these triumphs, and rested satisfied in the King's present dispositions, which appeared wholly in its favour, all things might have remained quiet: for the Catholics, convinced of the madness of their projects, were ready to abstain from all practices inimical to the religion of the State, on the single condition that they should not be persecuted for their adherence to the ancient faith. But the Kirk were not disposed to take this quiet course. The principle of toleration, divine as it assuredly is in its origin, yet so late in its recognition even amongst the best men, was then utterly unknown to either party, Reformed or Catholic. The permission even of a single case of Catholic worship, however secret,—the attendance of a solitary individual at a single mass, in the remotest district of the land, at the dead hour of night, in the most secluded chamber, and where none could come but such as knelt before the altar for conscience' sake, and in all sincerity of soul,—such worship, and its permission for an hour, was considered an open encouragement of Antichrist and Idolatry. To extinguish the Mass for ever, to compel its supporters to embrace what the Kirk considered to be the purity of Presbyterian truth, and this under the penalties of life and limb, or in its mildest form of treason, banishment, and forfeiture, was considered not merely praiseworthy but a point of high religious duty; and the whole apparatus of the Kirk, the whole

Buchanan's History of Scotland; with a Continuation to the Present Time, vol. iii. pp. 185, 186.

inquisitorial machinery of detection and persecution, was brought to bear upon the accomplishment of these great ends. Are we to wonder that, under such a state of things, the intrigues of the Catholics for the overturn of a government which sanctioned such a system continued; that when they knew, or suspected that the King himself was averse to persecution, they were encouraged to renew their intercourse with Spain; and to hope that a new outbreak, if properly directed, might lead either to the destruction of a rival faith, or to the establishment of liberty of conscience.

A discovery which occurred at this time corroborates these remarks, and drew after it important consequences. The Kirk, in the course of its inquisitions, in which it was assisted by Sir Robert Bowes, the resident English Ambassador, received certain information that George Ker, a Catholic gentleman and brother of the Abbot of Newbottle, was secretly passing into Spain with important letters. Upon this, Mr Andrew Knox minister of Paisley, setting off with a body of armed men furnished by Lord Ross, traced Ker to Glasgow, and thence to the little isles of the Cumrays in the mouth of the Clyde, where they seized him in the night, immediately after he had got on board the ship which was to carry him to the Continent; his luggage was then searched, the packets of letters found, and he himself hurried a prisoner to Edinburgh; where the Provost and the citizens, alarmed by the reports which had already reached them, received him with shouts of triumph and exe-

cration. The unfortunate man at first attempted to deny all, and as he had many friends in the Council who opposed severity, was likely to escape; but at the King's special command he was put to the torture,[1] and on the second stroke of the boots confessed the conspiracy; the main branch of which was to secure and hasten the descent of a Spanish force upon the coast of Scotland. This army was to be joined by the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus, with Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, uncle to Huntly, and other Catholic barons. "Amongst the letters seized, and which appeared to be written by Scottish Jesuits and seminary priests to their brethren on the Continent, there were found several signatures of the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus. These were written at the bottom of blank sheets of paper, with the seals of these noblemen attached to them; from which circumstance the plot received the name of the "Spanish Blanks." It was at first suspected by Bowes, who was familiar with all the *arcana* of conspiracy, that the blanks were written over with ink

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 6th February, 1592-3. Bowes, writing to Burghley, says, "Commission is given to Justice-Clerk, Blantyre, and George Young, to offer him the torture this day. But many think that he shall suffer the torment without confession."

It appears by a letter of Bowes to the Queen of England, 21st January, 1592-3, that Mr Andrew Knox received an assurance from Elizabeth, that "good disposition and regard should be had of his labours, charges, perils, and services;" whereupon Mr Andrew returned into his country to search out the haunts of the English Catholics lurking in those parts.

of white vitriol, prepared;[1] but it turned out that they were to be filled up afterwards by Ker, according to verbal instructions, and to be delivered to the King of Spain.[2] It may well be imagined that this discovery—serious enough, certainly, in its known features, and around which there was that air of mystery which gave ample scope for all kinds of terror and exaggeration—was enough to throw the Kirk and the people into a state of high excitement. The Council, having examined the letters, had no doubt of their authenticity. Sir John Carmichael and Sir George Hume were sent to the King, who was at Stirling, to entreat his immediate presence. Angus, then at Edinburgh, and recently returned from an expedition to the North, was committed to the castle of Edinburgh; and proclamation made that all Jesuits, seminary priests, and excommunicates, should, within three hours, depart the city on pain of death.[3] A Convention of the nobility and Protestant gentry was forthwith held, and, headed by the ministers, presented themselves at the palace, and insisted on the instant prosecution and punishment of the traitors; declaring their readiness to hazard life and property in the service. The Queen of Scotland, and the powerful house of the Setons, earnestly

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 1st January, 1592-3.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 13th January, 1592-3.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 3d January, 1592-3.

interceded for Ker,[1] who in the end escaped; but Graham of Fintry, found to be deeply implicated, was imprisoned; and Angus' trial and forfeiture was considered so certain, that the courtiers, wolf-like, began to smell the prey; and Sir George Hume wrote pressingly to Lord Hume, requiring him to come speedily to Court that he might have his share in the spoils.[2]

James' conduct at this crisis was both wise and spirited. He had received information, much about the same time when the Spanish conspiracy came to light, that his traitorous subject Bothwell, who had twice invaded his palace and attempted to seize his person, was received in England and regarded with favour by Elizabeth. Now was the time, he felt, to put down Bothwell for ever. He was well aware that this fierce and formidable insurgent was favoured secretly by the Kirk, and by many of those nobles who now insisted upon the instant pursuit of the Popish earls. He was aware, too, that Elizabeth's alarm on the discovery of the Spanish Blanks would prompt her to advise the most severe measures against the delinquents, and he ably availed himself of all this. To the Kirk and the Protestant barons he gave the most friendly reception; spoke loudly of Angus' instant forfeiture; and not only agreed to the pursuit of Huntly, Errol, and their associates, but declared that he would lead the army in person and seize them in their northern strongholds. Nor were these mere

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 13th January, 1592-3.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 13th January, 1592-3.

words. Huntly, Errol, and Auchendown, were commanded to enter themselves in ward at St Andrews, before the 5th February; public proclamation was made that all men should be ready, on the 25th of the same month, with armour and weapons, to march with the King in person against the traitors if they failed to deliver themselves; and various committees were appointed for the examination of all suspected persons, belonging either to the nobility, barons, burgesses, or clergy.[1]

All this was most gratifying to the Kirk, and the Protestant leaders amongst the nobility. But, in return for this, the King demanded as cordial a coöperation on their side for the attack and destruction of Bothwell, whose treasons, though of a different nature, were even more flagrant than those of the Catholic earls; and this they were not in a situation to refuse. Having thus secured the coöperation of the Kirk and the Protestant lords against Bothwell, James gave audience to Bowes, who was little prepared for the violence with which he was to be received. The Ambassador had recently found himself in a difficult situation. He had been familiar with all the plots of Bothwell, and looked upon them with no unfavourable eye, although he took care not directly to implicate himself. He had repeatedly applied to Burghley to receive instructions and understand the Queen's wishes: but Elizabeth was too cautious to commit herself; whilst Bowes

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 19th January, 1592-3.

knew for certain that she encouraged Bothwell secretly, and expressed the highest scorn and contempt for Huntly and the Spanish faction, whom she branded as base traitors who had sold their country. On this subject Elizabeth, shortly before this,[1] had sent a letter to James, part of which, relating to the Spanish faction, from its vigour, is worthy of preservation:—

"Advance not," said she, "such as hang their hopes on other strings than you may tune. Them that gold can corrupt, think not your gifts can assure. Who once have made shipwreck of their country, let them never enjoy it. Weed out the weeds, lest the best corn fester. Never arm with power such whose bitterness must follow after you; nor trust not their trust that under any colour will thrall their own soil.

"I may not, nor will I, conceal overtures that of late full amply have been made me, how you may plainly know all the combiners against your State, and how you may entrap them and so assure your kingdom. Consider, if this actor doth deserve surety of life—not of land, but such as may preserve breath, to spend where best it shall please you. When I see the day, I will impart my advice to whom it most appertains.

"Now bethink, my dear brother, what farther you will have me do. In meanwhile, beware to give the reins into the hands of any, lest it be too late to revoke such actions done. Let no one of the Spanish faction in your absence, yea, when you are present,

[1] On the 4th December, 1592.

receive strength or countenance. You know, but for you, all of them be alike for me, for my particular. Yet I may not deny, without spot or wrinkle, but I abhor such as set their country to sale. And thus, committing you to God's tuition, I shall remain the faithful holder of my vowed amity,

"Your most affectionate Sister and Cousin.[1]"

What was James' reply to this obscure epigrammatic epistle is not known; but very shortly after it was written, the Spanish conspiracy came to light, and the Scottish King at the same time discovered the favour shown to Bothwell in England with the full countenance of the Queen. Mr Lock, an agent of Burghley and a near relative of the notorious intriguer John Colvile, brother to the Laird of Easter Wemyss, had been sent down to Scotland with instructions to form a faction with the Kirk and the Protestant barons for Bothwell's restoration; and their plots had proceeded so far, that the attack upon the palace, which afterwards occurred in the autumn of this year, would probably have been enterprised sooner, but for the discovery of the Spanish Blanks.[2] Of all these English intrigues James was now aware; and when Bowes was admitted to an audience, the monarch broke into a violent passion. The Queen of England, he declared, did him foul injustice in

[1] Warrender MS., vol. B, p. 361. Indorsed, Delivered by Mr Bowes, 4th December, 1592.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 27th December, 1592.

countenancing a rebel and traitor like Bothwell. Her subjects received and harboured him, and they pleaded her warrant to do so. If so, he must account it done to his scorn and dishonour. However, he should investigate the matter closely; and should it turn out so, (this he said loudly, and in the hearing of many about him,) there was an end to his amity with the Queen, and with every man in England.

So unwonted a storm had never yet broken the serene tenor of James' temper; and Bowes found it difficult to appease it even by the most earnest assurances of Elizabeth's innocence.[1] In a subsequent interview, however, he was somewhat more successful. The Queen of England despatched a letter written wholly in her own hand, in a strain of so much conciliation, and fraught with so much sound advice, that the monarch was recovered; showed the epistle, with many expressions of admiration, to his confidential councillors and some of the chief ministers, who reiterated their exhortations to proceed roundly against the Catholic lords. There were some difficulties, however, in the way. Huntly solemnly declared his innocence, and affirmed that the blanks were not signed by him. If he, Errol, and Angus, delivered themselves by the appointed day, and were once secured in prison, there was little doubt of the issue; but if, as suspected, they fled and raised their feudal strength, the King must march against them; and, with an impoverished Exchequer, who was to pay his

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. 19th January, 1592-3.

troops? Elizabeth's bounty, he said, had flowed in a far more niggard stream than had been promised. He had looked to have five thousand a-year, the sum allowed by Henry the Eighth to the Queen herself when Princess; but she had only given him three thousand.[1] As to that occasion of which she reminded him, when one year's charges for his behoof had come to nine thousand pounds, and six thousand men been kept in readiness for his service, he protested that by no effort could he recall such things to memory; but never would he press her for money unless at a time of extreme need like the present. But to explain all more fully, he meant (as he assured Bowes) to send her an ambassador—Sir Robert Melvil, or some other confidential councillor.[2]

Meantime, before any such resolution could be acted on, Elizabeth's anxiety and the alarming confessions of Ker prompted her to despatch Lord Burgh with a message to the King, and instructions to press on the trials of the Spanish lords by every possible method. What had been fully expected by all who knew these bold insurgents had now occurred. Instead of a surrender of their persons on the day appointed, Huntly, Errol, Auchendown, and their associates, kept themselves within their strongholds in the North. Angus escaped from the castle of Edinburgh, letting himself down the walls by a rope, and joined his friends in the Highlands; and the King's

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 27th January, 1592-3.

[2] Id. Ibid.

Council, with the higher nobles, became cold and inactive. But the monarch himself was roused by this opposition into unwonted energy. He alone had conducted the examination of Ker, had advocated the use of torture against the advice of his ministers, and by this horrible expedient had extorted a confession. He now hurried forward the trial of Graham of Fintry, had him found guilty, and instantly executed; and having requested the prayers of the Kirk for success in his expedition, and appointed the Earl of Morton to be Lieutenant-general in his absence, he placed himself at the head of his army and proceeded against the rebels.[1] To this extraordinary vigour of the King against the Spanish faction, Bowes, in his letter to Burghley, bore ample evidence. After mentioning that Fintry had offered fifty thousand pounds Scots to save his life, the Ambassador observes,—"the King in this hath remained resolute; and alone, without the assistance of any of his council, prosecuted the cause. And now, he saith, that as alone he hath drawn his sword against his rebels, without the Council's aid or allowance of his nobility, so he will proceed, with the help of God, to punish and prosecute the traitors in these high treasons, by all the means in his power; and with the assistance of his barons, burghs, and Kirk, whom he findeth ready to aid him therein. He was occasioned to stay his journey two days beyond his diet for the trial and execution of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 14th February, 1592-3. Same to same, 15th February, 1592-3. Same to same, 21st February, 1592-3.

Fintry, and for some wants which are yet slenderly supplied: nevertheless, he is ready and determined to enter into his *rode* to-morrow, wherein he shall be well strengthened with his barons; but few noblemen shall attend upon him."[1]

On the 24th of February, Lord Burgh, Elizabeth's Ambassador, arrived in Edinburgh; and on his heels came intelligence of the success of the Scottish King.[2] James had advanced without a check to Aberdeen. Huntly and Errol, finding it impossible to make head against the royal forces, had fled, slenderly accompanied, to Caithness; and the Earl of Athol, who joined the King with twelve hundred foot and nine hundred horse, was appointed Lieutenant-general beyond Spey, to reduce those unquiet regions and prevent their again falling under the power of the rebels.[3] Meanwhile, the Catholic earls were declared forfeited, and their estates seized by the Crown; but, from some circumstances, it was augured that the King meant to deal leniently, and not utterly wreck them. Strathbogie castle, belonging to Huntly, was given to Archibald Carmichael, with sixteen of the royal guard for a garrison; but the Countess of Huntly, sister to the Duke of Lennox, was allowed to retain, for her winter residence, the Bog of Gicht, his greatest castle

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 15th February, 1592-3.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Burgh to Burghley, 26th Feb. 1592-3.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Burgh to Burghley, 6th March, 1592-3.

and estate. Athol received the rest of his lands, not in gift, but to hold them as factor for the Crown. Errol's father-in-law, the Earl Marshal, bought his son's escheat for a thousand marks, with the keeping of his castle of Slanes: his mother held his other house of Logie-Almond for her jointure; and Athol, whose sister he had married for his second wife, became factor of his other possessions. Angus was more severely dealt with, not being saved by any connexion or relationship with men in power.[1] His house and castle of Tantallon were delivered to the keeping of the Laird of Pollard; Bonkle and Preston to William Hume, brother of the King's favourite, Sir George Hume; Douglasdale, and the rest of his lands, seized for debt. On the whole, however, the rebel lords, considering their crimes, were leniently dealt with. Their persons were safe in the fastnesses of Caithness; their patrimonal interest, and rights of succession, were considered to be still entire, till an act of Parliament had confirmed the forfeitures; and part of their estates were placed in friendly hands. So evident was all this, that Lord Burgh wrote to

[1] Angus' mother was a Graham, daughter of the Laird of Morphy. He married the eldest daughter of the Lord Oliphant. MS. St. P. Off., 1st July, 1592. A Catalogue of the Nobility in Scotland. The original indorsement had been simply "Of the nobility in Scotland." Burghley has prefixed the words "A catalogue." I mention this minute circumstance to prove the authenticity of the paper, which is a highly valuable document, showing the ages, matrimonial descent, and marriages, of the whole body of the Scottish nobility at the period, 1st July, 1592.

Burghley, that the King "dissembled a confiscation," and would leave the rebels in full strength.[1]

On his return from his northern expedition, James gave audience to Lord Burgh, and expressed himself gratified by the message and advice of Elizabeth. "It was her interest," he said, "to coöperate heartily with him in all his present actions, and assist him to her utmost. Was she not as deeply concerned to hinder the Spaniard setting his foot in Scotland as in France or the Low Countries? At this moment money was imperatively called for; an armed force of large extent must be kept up; he needed troops to guard his person, exposed to hourly danger from the plots of his nobles, and the snares of the arch-traitor Bothwell, with whose daring character she was too well acquainted:—he needed them to overawe the districts still favourable to the Catholic lords—to garrison their houses, which, according to his good sister's advice, he had seized—to watch the coast where the Spaniards were likeliest to land—to repulse them, if they effected a descent. The cause was common to both; and he looked not only for sympathy and counsel, but for hard coin and brave men. On one point he assured Burgh, that the message which he took back must be peremptory. "Bothwell," said he, "that vile traitor, whose offences against me are unpardonable, and such as, for example's sake, should make him to be abhorred by all sovereign Princes, is harboured in England: let my sister expel him,

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Burgh to Burghley, 5th March, 1592-3.

or deliver him up, as she tenders her own honour and my contentment. Should he henceforth be conforted or concealed in her dominions, I must roundly assure her, not only that our amity is at an end, but that I shall be enforced to join in friendship with her greatest enemies for my own safety."[1]

This spirited remonstrance was not out of place; for at this moment Elizabeth, pursuing her old policy of weakening Scotland, by destroying its tranquillity and keeping up its internal commotions, was encouraging Bothwell to a new and more desperate attempt against the King and his government. Lord Burgh had received secret instructions to entertain this fierce and lawless man. To discover his strength and means, and increase his faction at Court and with the ministers of the Kirk, was the secret part of this Ambassador's mission; and when James expressed to Bowes his admiration of the eloquence, grace, and courtly manners of this nobleman, he little knew the hidden mine which he was digging under his feet. Yet so it was. Bothwell had offered his services to the English Queen; had written to Lord Burghley; had received an answer of encouragement, though cautiously worded; and had been ordered by the High Treasurer to write secretly to the Queen.[2] It will immediately

[1] Answers for the Lord Burgh, concerning Bothwell. MS. wholly in James' hand. Warrender MSS. Book B, p. 401.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bothwell to Thomas Musgrave, whom he styles his "Loving brother, Captain of Bewcastle," 7th March, 1592-3. MS. St. P. Off., Mr Lock's Instructions, 10th February, 1592-3, wholly in Lord Burghley's hand.

appear how rapidly this new conspiracy came to maturity, and how suddenly it burst upon the King.

Meanwhile, the various factions and family feuds amongst the nobility had increased to such a degree, that the whole cares of the government fell upon the monarch; and James, naturally indolent and fond of his pastimes, began to languish for the return of the Chancellor Maitland. This powerful minister had been driven from Court by the antipathy of the Queen of Scots, the Duke of Lennox, and the whole faction of the Stewarts, who held him as their mortal enemy, and had repeatedly plotted against his life. The exact cause of the Queen's "heavy wrath" against Maitland, appears to have been a mystery alike to the King and to Bowes; but it was deeply rooted, and nearly touched her honour. He was at deadly feud also with the Master of Glammis, and hated by Bothwell, who regarded him as the author of all his calamities, and the forger of that accusation of witchcraft, under the imputation of which he was now a banished and broken man. It was difficult for the King to recall to power a minister who lay under such a load of enmity; and, for the present, he was contented to visit him in his retreat at Lethington, and consult him upon the affairs of Government.[1] All, however, looked to his probable restora-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 6th Feb. 1592-3. Also, Ibid., 7th April, 1593. "Occurrents in Scotland" brought by the Lord Burgh who came to the Court 14th April. This indorsation is by Burghley. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 19th April, 1593.

tion to power; and the bare idea of it occasioned the utmost jealousy and heart-burning in Court.

Nothing, at this moment, could be more deplorable than the torn and distracted state of the Scottish nobility. The Duke of Lennox and the Lord Hamilton, the two first noblemen in the realm, were at mortal feud; the subject of their quarrel being an attempt, on the part of Lennox, to get himself declared the next in succession to the Crown, to the exclusion of the prior right of the family of Hamilton.[1] Huntly again, and all those barons who supported him, were at feud with the potent Earl of Athol, and the whole race of Stewart; the cause of their enmity being an unquenchable thirst of revenge for the murder of the Earl of Murray. Argyll, Ochiltree, and all the barons who adhered to them, were at feud with Lord Thirlstane the Chancellor, Lord Hume, Lord Fleming, and their faction and allies; in which course they were urged forward by the enmity of the Queen of Scots.[2] It is difficult, by any general expressions, to convey a picture of the miserable state of a country torn by such feuds as these. Nor were these the sole causes of disquiet: Huntly, Angus, and Errol, although declared traitors, were at large in the North; Bothwell, whom the King justly regarded as his mortal enemy, was also at liberty, harboured sometimes on the Borders, sometimes in England, and even daring to enter the capital in disguise and hold secret intercourse with the noblemen about the King's

1 MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 20th May, 1593.
2 MS. St. P. Off. Occurrents of Scotland, 7th April, 1593.

person. The intrigues of the Catholics, although checked by the late discoveries, were not at an end; and the ministers of the Kirk, utterly dissatisfied with the leniency which James had exhibited to the rebel earls, began to attack his conduct in the pulpit, and to throw out surmises of his secret inclinations to Popery. Is it a subject of wonder that James, thus surrounded with danger and disquietude, without a minister whom he could trust, or a nobility on whose loyalty and affections he could for a moment depend, should have been driven into measures which may often appear inconsistent and capricious? The sole party on whom he could depend was that of the ministers of the Kirk, with the lesser barons and the burghs;[1] and their support was only to be bought at the price of the utter destruction of the Catholic earls, and the entire extirpation of the Catholic faith.

To this sweeping act of persecution the monarch would not consent. At this moment thirteen of the nobility of Scotland were Catholics;[2] and, in the northern counties, a large proportion of the people were attached to the same faith. It was insisted on, by the leading ministers of the Kirk, in a Convention of the Estates which the King summoned at this time,[3] that the strictest investigation should be made for the discovery and imprisonment of all

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Burgh to Burghley, 30th March, 1593.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Catalogue of the Nobility of Scotland, 1st July, 1592.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 19th April, 1593., Bowes to Burghley.

suspected of heresy; and that, under the penalties of forfeiture and banishment, they should be compelled to recant, and embrace the Reformed religion. The severity and intolerance of such demands will be best understood by quoting the words of the original. The Kirk represented that, "Seeing the increase of Papistry daily within this realm," it was craved of his Majesty, with his Council and nobility at that time assembled, "that all Papists within the same may be punished according to the laws of God and of the realm. That the Act of Parliament might, *ipso facto*, strike upon all manner of men, landed or unlanded, in office or not, as it at present strikes against beneficed persons. That a declaration be made against all Jesuits, seminary priests, and trafficking Papists, pronouncing them guilty of treason; and that the penalties of the Act may be enforced against all persons who conceal or harbour them, not for three days, as it now stands, but for any time whatsoever. That all such persons as the Kirk had found to be Papists, although they be not excommunicated, should be debarred from occupying any office within the realm, as also from access to his Majesty's company, or enjoying any benefit of the laws. That upon this declaration, the pains of '*horning*' and other civil pains should follow, as upon the sentence of excommunication; and that an Act of Council should be passed to this effect, which in the next Parliament should be made law." If the King agreed to these demands, the Convention promised, for their part, that "their bodies, goods, friends, allies, ser-

vants, and possessions, should be wholly at his service, in any way he was pleased to employ them." During the whole pursuit of this cause, (the utter destruction of all Papistry within the realm,) they declared, that not only their whole numbers should be, at all times, a guard to the royal person, but that the King might select from them any force he pleased as a daily body guard; the pay of which, however, they prudently added, ought to be levied from the possessions of the Catholics; and if this were not enough, they would themselves make up the difference.[1]

To these sweeping and severe penalties James would by no means consent; and the Kirk, irritated by his refusal, withdrew that assistance and coöperation which it had hitherto lent him in preserving peace and good order. The effects of this were soon apparent. Instead of the happy tranquillity which had reigned during his absence in Denmark, and which he had mainly ascribed to the efforts of the ministers, the capital, as the time of the Parliament approached, presented almost daily scenes of outrage and confusion. The security and sanctity of domestic life were invaded and despised; ruffians, under the command, and openly protected by the nobles, tore honourable maidens from the bosom of their families, and carried them off in open day. James Gray, a brother of the

[1] MS. St. P. Off. Humble petition of the General Assembly of the Kirk, craved of his Majesty's Council and nobility presently convened. Fra Dundee, this Lord's day, 29th April, 1593. Also, MS. St. P. Off., "The Effects of the Answers of this Convention to the Articles proponed by the King's Majesty."

notorious Master of Gray, seized a young lady named Carnegie, an heiress, and then living under her father's roof; carried her forcibly down a narrow close, or street, to the North Loch, a lake which then surrounded the castle; delivered her to a party of armed men, who dragged her into a boat, her hair hanging about her face, and her clothes almost torn from her person; whilst Gray's associate, Lord Hume, kept the streets with his retainers, beat off the Provost who attempted a rescue, and slew some of the citizens who had presumed to interfere. Next day, the chief magistrate carried his complaint in person before the King. "Do you see here any of my nobles whom you can accuse?" said James. At that moment Hume was standing beside James; but when the unhappy Provost encountered his fierce eye, the impeachment stuck in his throat from terror, and he retired silent and abashed.[1] The outrage was the more shameful, as Gray was a gentleman of the King's suite, and had been assisted by Sir James Sandilands and other courtiers; whilst the Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar were playing tennis hard by, and abstained from all interference. So atrocious an insult upon the laws, and the miserable weakness exhibited by the King, appear to have made a deep impression on Burghley, who has written on the margin of Bowes' letter this pithy note—"A miserable State, that may cause us to bless ours, and our Governess."[2] It was

[1] MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus., Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1137. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 10th June, 1593.

[2] Id. Ibid.

not long after this that a day of law, as it was termed, was to be kept for the trial of Campbell of Ardkinglass, accused of the murder of the Laird of Caddell, a gentleman of the name of Campbell, who had himself been a principal actor in the tragedy of the Earl of Murray. Ardkinglass was a relative and favourite of Argyll, who assembled his friends, and on the day of trial entered the capital with a formidable force. The accused was about to be married to a natural daughter of Lord John Hamilton, which occasioned the muster of the whole power of that house; and the Chancellor Thirlstane, esteeming the opportunity a favourable one to exhibit his strength, and prepare the way for his return to Court, rode from his retirement into the city, attended by Arbroath, Montrose, Seton, Livingston, Glencairn, Eglinton, and other powerful friends.[1] This again was sufficient to rouse the fears of his enemies, the party of the Queen; who assembled in great strength, led by the Duke of Lennox, and numbering in their ranks, Mar, Morton, Hume, the Master of Glammis, Sir George Hume, Lord Spiny, and Sir James Sandilands. The Border barons too, Lord Maxwell and Cessford, were on their march; the Lords of Session, who had to try the criminal, and trembled for their lives, had resolved to raise a body of a hundred men to protect them; and the townsmen were, in the meantime, kept day and night under arms. All this was most formidable to the King, who found

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 17th June, 1593. Also, Ibid., same to same, 20th June, 1593.

himself almost alone amid his difficulties.[1] The danger, too, was increased by the sudden apparition, amid the darkness, of a meteor which had ever indicated perplexity and change. Captain James Stewart, once the formidable and haughty Earl of Arran, had been seen lately in the palace. It was known he had been favourably received by James in several secret interviews; the Queen and the Duke were his friends; his misfortunes had neither tamed his pride, nor quelled that fierce energy and unscrupulous daring which had prompted him to destroy the Regent Morton; and at this crisis, when all were anticipating the return of the Chancellor to power, it was suspected that the enemies of Maitland had determined to recall Stewart, and employ him for the destruction of this minister.[2] He had already pulled down one far mightier from his palmy state: what, said the Queen and Lennox, was to prevent him from being successful against another?

Amid these complicated distresses James had scarcely one councillor on whom he could rely. With his capital bristling with steel-clad barons, each feeling himself superior to the throne or the law; the streets in possession of tumultuous bodies of retainers and feudal banditti, armed to the teeth and commanded by men at mortal feud with each other; his court and palace divided by the intrigues of the several rival factions; diffident even of the gentlemen who waited on his person; distracted by reports that

1 MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 17th June, 1593.
2 Ibid., 20th June, 1593.

troopers had been seen hovering in the neighbourhood, completely armed and disguised;[1] deserted for the time by the Kirk; uncertain as yet of the success of the embassy of Sir Robert Melvil, whom he had lately sent to Elizabeth; and tormented by hourly reports of undefined but urgent dangers and mysterious conspiracies; the wonder is, that a prince of James' indolent and timid temper should not have sunk under such a state of things. But the emergency seemed to rouse him; and by an unusual exertion of firmness and good sense, he succeeded in warding off the dangers, persuaded the barons to dismiss their followers, and brought about a reconciliation between the Queen's faction, led by the Duke, and their powerful enemy the Chancellor Thirlstane. It had long been evident to the King that, in the present state of the country, no hand but that of Maitland could save the Government from absolute wreck and disruption; and it was agreed, that on the conclusion of the Parliament, which was now on the eve of meeting, this minister should return to Court, and be reinstated in his high office.[2]

Scarce, however, was this danger averted than the city was thrown into a new state of excitement by the shrieks and lamentations of a troop of miserable women, who had travelled from the Borders, the victims and survivors of a recent raid conducted by

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 19th June, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., ut supra. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 22d June, 1593. Also, Ibid., same to same, 28th June, 1593.

the Laird of Johnston. Their purpose was to throw themselves before the King, and demand justice for the slaughter of their sons and husbands, whose bloody shirts they held above their heads, exhibiting them to the people as they marched through the streets, and imprecating vengeance upon their murderers. It was a sight which, in any other country, might well have roused both pity and indignation; but though the people murmured, the ghastly procession passed on without further notice, and neither King nor noble condescended to interfere.[1]

The Parliament now assembled; but its proceedings were delayed by a quarrel between the higher nobles for the precedency in bearing the honours. At length it was arranged that Lennox should carry the crown, Argyll the sceptre, and Morton the sword; and that, in the absence of the Chancellor Maitland, Alexander Seton, President of the Session, should fill his place, and conduct the proceedings.[2] Bothwell was then forfeited, and proclaimed a traitor at the Cross; and the Queen's jointure, which had been settled at her marriage, and regarding which some difficulties had arisen, was confirmed. To conciliate the Kirk, an act was passed exempting ministers' stipends from taxation; another statute was introduced against the Mass; and a strict inquisition ordered to be made for all Papists and seminary priests: but on the great subject for which it was

[1] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1138-39.

[2] MS. Brit. Mus., Caligula, D II. 128. Bowes to Burghley, July 16th, 1593.

understood Parliament had met—the prosecution and forfeiture of the Popish earls—the party of the Kirk were miserably disappointed, or rather, all their gloomiest expectations were fulfilled. Huntly, Errol, Angus, and Auchendown, escaped forfeiture. It had been secretly resolved by the King, that no extreme proceedings should be adopted against these noblemen, who had a numerous and powerful party on their side,[1] till Sir Robert Melvil, then at the English Court, had brought an answer from Elizabeth; and although the Earl of Argyll, Lord Forbes, Lord Lindsay, and the Protestant faction, anxiously urged the most severe measures, James was resolute. Mr David Makgill, the King's advocate, a man of extraordinary talent, but who had often opposed the Kirk, declared that the summonses were informal, the evidence of traitorous designs and correspondence with Spain insufficient; and that it was impossible for any act of attainder to pass in the present meeting of the Estates.[2]

This for the time settled the matter: but the Kirk were deeply indignant; and their champion, Mr John Davison, denounced the proceedings, and attacked the sovereign in the pulpit on the Sunday which succeeded their close. "It was a black Parliament," he said; "for iniquity was seated in the High Court of Justice, and had trodden equity under foot. It was a black Parliament: for the arch-traitors had escaped

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 20th June, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, B.M., Caligula, D II., Bowes to Burghley, 8th July; also, 16th July, and 14th July, 1593.

—escaped, did he say! no: they were absolved; and now all good men might prepare themselves for darker days: trials were at hand: it had ever been seen that the absolving of the wicked imported the persecution of the righteous. Let us pray," said he, in conclusion "that the King, by some sanctified plagues, may be turned again to God."[1]

Such plagues as Davison thus prayed for, were nearer at hand than many imagined: for Elizabeth, according to her favourite policy, had more than one plot now carrying forward in Scotland. Her accredited Ambassador, Sir Robert Bowes, was indeed instructed to keep up the most friendly assurances, and to promise the King of Scots her cordial assistance in defeating Bothwell, and destroying the Roman Catholic faction: yet at this moment she had sent Mr Henry Lock into Scotland, who with his brother-in-law, the notorious Mr John Colvil, and Bothwell himself, met secretly in Edinburgh, and organized a formidable confederacy,[2] the object of which was to bring in Bothwell, take possession of the King's person, overwhelm the Chancellor Maitland who was on the eve of being recalled to power, and render the Kirk triumphant over its enemies. To this plot the Duke of Lennox, the Earl of Mar, the Earl of Athol, Lord Ochiltree, and the whole noblemen and barons of the name and race of Stewart were parties; and they chose this meeting of the three Estates, when the King was surrounded by many of their faction, to carry their

1 MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1169.

2 MS. St. P. Off. B.C., John Carey to Burghley, 1st Aug. 1593.

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purpose into execution. The Parliament was now about to terminate, when, on the night of the 23d of July, Bothwell was secretly conveyed into the house of Lady Gowrie, which adjoined the palace of Holyrood. This lady's daughter was the Countess of Athol, to whose courage and ingenuity the success of the plot was principally owing. Early in the morning of the 24th of July, she smuggled Bothwell and Mr John Colvil, by a back passage, into the anteroom adjoining the King's bedchamber, hid them behind the arras, removed the weapons of the guard, and locked the door of the Queen's bedchamber, through which the King might have escaped. The gates of the palace were then occupied by the Duke and Athol, who placed a guard upon them. All this time James was asleep; but he awoke at nine, and calling for one of the gentlemen of his bedchamber, got up and threw his nightgown about him. An alarm now suddenly rose in the next room; and the King rushing out with his hose about his heels, and his under-garments in his hands, confronted Bothwell, who had glided from behind the hangings, and stood with his drawn sword in his hand, Colvil being beside him. James shouted "Treason!" and ran to the door of the Queen's bedroom; but it was found locked: and nothing remained but to face his enemy, which, when driven to it, he did with unwonted spirit, and his usual voluble eloquence. "Come on," said he, "Francis: you seek my life, and I know I am wholly in your power. Take your King's life: I am ready to die. Better to die with honour than live in captivity and shame.

Nay, kneel not, man," he continued, (by this time the Duke and Athol had come in, and Bothwell and Colvil had thrown themselves on their knees;) "kneel not, and add hypocrisy to treason. You protest, forsooth, you only come to sue for pardon, to submit yourself to your trial for witchcraft, to be cleansed by your peers of the foul imputations which lie heavy on you. Does this violent manner of repair look like a suppliant? Is it not dishonourable to me, and disgraceful to my servants who have allowed it? What do you take me for?" Am I not your anointed King, twenty-seven years old, and no longer a boy or a minor, when every faction could make me their property? But you have plotted my death, and I call upon you now to execute your purpose: for I will not live a prisoner and dishonoured." As he said this, the King sat calmly down, as if prepared for the worst; but Bothwell, still on his knees, loudly disclaimed all such murderous intentions, and kissing the hilt of his sword, took it by the point, delivered it to his sovereign, and placing his head beneath James' foot, bared his neck of its long tresses, (then the fashion of the young gallants of the day,) and called upon him to strike it off if he believed that he ever harboured a thought against his royal person.[1] The Duke of Lennox, Athol and Ochiltree, now vehemently interceded for the Earl; and James, raising him from the ground, retired into a window recess to talk apart; when an uproar arose below in

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, Aug. 18, 1593. Melvil's Memoirs, Bannat. edit., pp. 414, 415.

the streets, and the citizens of Edinburgh, who had heard a rumour of the enterprise, rushed tumultuously into the palace-yard, headed by their Provost, Alexander Hume, who loudly called to the King, then standing at the open casement, that, on a single word from him, they would force the doors and rid him of the traitors about him. James, however, who dreaded to be slain, or torn in pieces, if the two factions came to blows, commanded the citizens to disperse; and taking refuge in that dissimulation of which he was so great a master, pretended to be reconciled to Bothwell, fixed a near day for his trial, and simply stipulated that, till he was acquitted, he should retire from Court. To all this the Earl agreed. Next day his peace was proclaimed by the heralds at the Cross. The people, of whom he was a great favourite, crowded round him; and not only his own faction, which was very strong, but the ministers of the Kirk showed themselves highly gratified at his return.[1]

Having settled this, Bothwell left the capital; and attended only by two servants, rode to Berwick, where he had an interview with Mr John Carey, the son of Lord Hunsdon, and Governor of that Border town; showed him the commission under the King of Scots' hand assuring him of pardon; professed the utmost devotion to Elizabeth; and declared that, within a brief season, he expected to be made "Lieutenant-general of the whole country."[2] He then

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 25th July, 1593. Ibid. Another letter, same day, same to the same.

[2] MS. St. P. Off. B.C., John Carey to Burghley, 1st Aug., 1593.

proceeded to Durham, on his road, as he said, to the English Court, to confer with her Majesty "what course it would please her to direct for his guidance;" and on reaching that city, insisted on thrusting himself into the confidence and becoming the guest of Dr Toby Mathews, the Dean, one of the Council of the North; who vehemently declined his explanations, professed his ignorance of "Scottish causes," and advised him to address himself to Burghley, Lord Hunsdon, or Sir Robert Bowes. All was in vain, however. The Scottish Earl settled himself on the venerable dignitary, and "putting him to silence," ran over the story of his whole courses, and ended with his late seizure of the King. Mathews, who had no mind to be made a party in such violent matters, did not permit his eyelids to slumber till he had written an account of it all to Burghley. His letter, which is dated at midnight, on the 2d August, gives us an excellent account of the interview. "This day," says he, "about three of the clock afternoon, came hither to my house the Earl Bothwell, thereunto moved, as he protested, as well by some good opinion of me conceived, as for that he understands I am one of her Majesty's Council established in the North. * * And, albeit, I was very loath to enter into any speech of the Scottish affairs, especially of State, wishing him to write thereof to your Lordship, or to the Lord President; or, if he so thought good, to negotiate his business with her Majesty's Ambassador resident in Scotland,—yet could I not avoid it; but he would needs acquaint me

with somewhat thereof. * * Wherewith, putting me, as it were, to silence, he began, with exceeding amplifications, to acknowledge himself most bounden to her Majesty, for the permission he hath enjoyed in Northumberland and thereabouts, notwithstanding the King's importunity and practice of his enemies to the contrary; and to protest, with all solemnity, before the Majesty of God, that her Highness, in regard thereof, shall ever have him a loyal and most faithful *Englishman* hereafter: albeit, heretofore, he were thought never in opinion a Papist, yet in affection and faction a *Spaniard*. 'Well done once, my lord,' quoth I, 'is double well said;' which word, although he took somewhat displeasantly, yet did it occasion him to affirm and confirm the same, over and over again, so far as possibly may stand with the amity of both the Princes, and the perpetual conservation of religion now openly professed both in England and Scotland.

"Then began he to discourse the manner and means of his late enterprise, and entrance to the King's presence; * * which, to mine understanding, was a plain surprise of the King in his bedchamber, made by the Earl and another gentleman, in the sight of the Duke, the Earls of Mar and Athol, with others his friends purposely assembled: his sword in his hand, drawn; the King fearfully offering to withdraw himself into the Queen's chamber, which before was devised to be kept shut against him. Howbeit, as upon short conference between the King and the Earl a little apart, they soon grew to an accord. * *

So he confessed to me, that immediately after this pacification, the King used all means rough and smooth, to sound and pierce him thoroughly: what favours had been done him; what sums of money sent him; what promises made him; what advice or direction given him from her Majesty or Council, or other English, to get access in Court to possess the King. Whereunto the Earl made answer by utter denial, saving that her Highness had a princely commiseration of his distressed estate, so far only as to yield him to take the benefit of the air of her country for preservation of his liberty and life, so narrowly sought by the King; so directly and cruelly by his adversaries. * * The King, with marvellous vehemency, insisted long upon that point, and eftsoons conjured him, 'by all the faith he bare him, by all the allegiance he owed him, by all the love he professed to him, by all the favour he hoped for ever to find of him, that he should not conceal Elizabeth's dealings from him; being,' as he said, 'a matter so manifest.' But," continued Dr Toby to Burghley, "the more violently the King sought to sift him, the more resolute was the Earl, not only peremptorily to disclaim every particular thereof, but in sort, as he could, to charge the King with much unkindness and unthankfulness causelessly to carry such jealousy and suspicion of her Majesty, who had hitherto been so gracious a lady, yea a very mother unto him; and, under the providence of God, the only supporter of his estate that ever he found, or is like to find upon earth.—'Now hear,

O Francis!' quoth the King, 'and have you then so soon forgotten my dear mother's death?'—'In good faith,' quoth the Earl, as he saith, 'if you, my liege, have forgiven it so long since, why should not I forget it so long after; the time of revenge being by your own means, and not mine, so far gone by. A fault can but have amends, which her Majesty hath made you many ways; and so hath she made me amends of all amisses, this once for all. To whom, with your pardon, Sir, I will ascribe not only my lands and living, but my life, with liberty and honour, which is most of all, not only as freely bestowed upon myself, but extended to all mine and my posterity: so as it shall never be seen or heard that ever Earl Bothwell, for all the crowns of France, for all the ducats in Spain, for all the siller and gold in the Indies East and West, for all the kingdoms in Europe, Africa, and Asia, shall utter one word in Council, or bear arms in field, against the amity of the two realms and princes, and the religion now by them authorized. And farther, I make God a vow,' quoth he to the King, 'that if ye, King Jamie, yourself, shall ever prove false to your religion and faith to your God, as they say the French King hath done to his shame and confusion, I shall be one of the first to withdraw from your Majesty, and to adhere to the Queen of England, the most gracious instrument of God, and the ornament of the Christian world.' From this he proceeded to the deposition of the Chancellor Maitland, upon whom he bestowed many an ill word and many a bad name; and an-

swered the objection of subrogating Stewart in his room (who is not as yet, but is likely to be;) undertaking confidently to assure, that whatsoever he had done heretofore, he should henceforth concur with her Highness, as well as himself, in all things lawfully to be commanded. What party they are, as well the Duke and Earls as other lords and lairds of most commandment, he saith your Lordship shall from him receive, in a catalogue subscribed with their own hands, by Mr Lock, whom these two days he hath looked for and mervaileth not a little at his uncoming. The Earl doth purpose to follow him soon after that he shall have undergone his trial for the witchcraft, which is now instant. The considerations whereof are, as he pretendeth, the only cause of absenting himself out of Scotland until the very day; lest, having now the King in his power, it should hereafter be objected, that in the proceedings thereof, he had done what himself listed. His Lordship did earnestly require me, moreover, because Mr Lock was not yet come, to remember your Lordship to take order that the union intended by her Majesty between the Popish and Protestant parties in Scotland be not overhastily prosecuted, lest the multitude of the one may in time, and that soon, wreck the other, being fewer in number, and so become rulers of the King. * * His Lordship acknowledged he hath now in Edinburgh and Holyrood House, of his own pay, a thousand soldiers, whereof the greater part are good musketeers, besides fifty horse to attend the King's person. * * * He maketh no question

but by her Majesty's assistance, whereupon he seemeth willing wholly to depend, he shall be, with his friends and followers, sufficiently able to manage the estate about the King, to the peace of both realms, against all the forces and frauds of Spain. * * *

"This nobleman," so the Dean concluded his letter to Burghley, "hath a wonderful wit, and as wonderful a volubility of tongue as ability and agility of body on horse and foot; competently learned in the Latin; well languaged in the French and Italian; much delighted in poetry; and of a very resolute disposition both to do and to suffer; nothing dainty to discover his humour or any good quality he hath. Now, as your Lordship is like to hear of all these and many other particulars more at large, as the King's affection to the Lady Morton's daughter, and a strange letter written to some such effect, with some good assurance taken to bring a greater estate there into their association, and unto her Majesty's devotion: so, since I was importuned thus far to lend him mine ear, and to relate his discourse to your Lordship with what fidelity and celerity I could, I am most humbly to beseech your Lordship, that in case it be not lawful (as in mine own poor opinion it is nothing convenient) for me to have talk with him or any from him, your Lordship will vouchsafe so much to signify unto me by your 'honourable letter,' or otherwise, with expedition; lest by him, or some of his, I be driven to this pressure in a manner, whether I will or no."[1]

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Dr Tobias Mathew to Burghley, 2d August, 1593.

Immediately after this visit of Bothwell to the Dean, Mr Lock, the Envoy of Elizabeth, who had organized the conspiracy which had thus placed James in the power of his enemies, arrived from Scotland; and by him Bothwell sent the following letter to the English Queen.

"MOST RENOWNED EMPRESS,—The gracious usage of so clement a Princess towards me in my greatest extremity should most justly accuse me of ingratitude, if (being in the place wherein a little more than before I might) I should not perform those offices which then I did promise. So have I directed the bearer hereof to impart the same unto your Majesty with more certainty than before; to whom, as I have [promised,] so did I move my associates in all points to ratify my speeches; and, by their oaths in his presence, confirm the same. So, fearing to offend your most royal ears, having in this, so in all other things, imparted my full mind to this bearer, whom I doubt not your Highness will credit, my most humble and dutiful service being remembered, and your Highness committed in the protection of the Eternal, after most humble kissing of your most heavenly hands, most humbly I take my leave."[1]

Having despatched this superlative effusion of flattery to his renowned Empress, Bothwell addressed a few lines to the grave Burghley, thanking him

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Earl of Bothwell to the Queen. Indorsed in Burghley's hand, *Earl Bothwell to the Q. Maj. by Lock*, 4th August, 1593.

for his "Fatherly advices;" promising all grateful obedience, and signing himself his loving son.[1] He then collected from his friends on the Border six couple of hounds and some excellent horses, as a conciliatory present to the Scottish King,[2] and returned to stand his trial for witchcraft, which had been fixed for the 10th of August.

Meanwhile, the royal captive had not been idle. Although surrounded by his enemies and strictly watched, he contrived to receive messages from Huntly, who was mustering a large force in the North; and secretly communicated with Lord Hume and the Master of Glammis on the best way of making his escape. He was assisted in this by three gentlemen of the house of Erskine, who had been permitted to remain about his person. They employed two others of his attendants, named Lesley and Ogilvy; and it was resolved that a rescue should be attempted immediately after the trial of Bothwell, when the King was to pass over the Forth from Holyrood to Falkland. A fleet horse was to be ready at the park gate; James, eluding his guards, was to mount and gallop to Lochleven; whilst Hume, with all his forces, making an onset on the opposite faction, who had been assembled for the trial in the capital, hoped either to seize their leaders or put them to death.[3] All

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bothwell to Burghley, Aug., 1593.

[2] MS. St. P. Off. B.C., John Carey to Burghley, 1st August, 1593. Also, Ibid. B.C., Sir William Reid to Burghley, 11th August, 1593; and Ibid. B.C., Sir John Foster to Burghley, 20th August, 1593.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, Aug. 11, 1593.

these preparations were managed by the King with such accomplished dissimulation, that he completely blinded Bothwell and his associates.

The trial now came on, and lasted from one in the forenoon till ten at night. In the indictment the Earl was accused, on the evidence of several depositions made by Richard Graham, who had been burnt for witchcraft, of three several attempts against the King's life and estate: one by poison; another by fabricating a waxen image in the likeness of the monarch; and the last, by enchantments to prevent his ever returning out of Denmark. The poison was compounded, according to the declaration of the wizard, of adders' skins, toads' skins, and the *hippomanes* in the head of a young foal; and was to be placed where it might ooze down upon the King's head where he usually sat, a single drop being of such devilish and pestilent strength as to cause instant death. The defence of the Earl was conducted by Craig the famous feudal lawyer, who contended that Graham's various depositions were not only inconsistent and contradictory in themselves, but refuted by the declarations of his miserable sisters in sorcery—Sampson, Macalzean, and Napier; whilst he proved, by unexceptionable evidence, that Graham had been induced to accuse Bothwell under a promise of pardon signed by the King's Council, and from the terror of being tortured. The Earl also defended himself with much spirit and eloquence; and the result was, his triumphant acquittal; which, considering the strength of his party at this moment, would probably

have been the issue had he been as guilty as he really appears to have been innocent.[1]

All this took place on the 10th. On the 11th, the plot laid for the King's escape was to be carried into effect; and at three in the morning of that day, everything was in readiness. William Lesley, one of the gentlemen of the bedchamber, carrying with him the King's ring and a letter for Lord Hume, was passing as silently as he could through the court-yard; when Bothwell, who slept in the palace, was awakened by the watch, who suspected some secret practice, and rushing down seized the messenger, found on his person the King's letter and signet, and discovered the whole. The rest of the gentlemen were then arrested and delivered to the guard; and the Earl, repairing to the King, who was by this time making ready to take horse, interdicted the journey, and charged him with his breach of promise. A stormy interview ensued. James insisted that he would ride to Falkland. Bothwell assured him that he should not leave the palace till the country was more settled. "You and your fellows," said James, "have broken your promises, imprisoned my servants, and now think to hold me a captive. Where are the three Erskines? where is Gilbert Ogilvy? where the faithful Lesley? Did ye not swear that I should return, after the trial, to Falkland; and that you, Bothwell, should withdraw from my company as soon as you were cleared by an assize?"—"And so we shall,"

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 12th August, 1593.

replied the Earl. "But first, my liege, we must be relaxed from the horn, restored to our lands and offices, and see the foul murder of the Earl of Murray punished. They who slew him are known; they, too, who signed the warrant for the slaughter, the Chancellor Maitland, Sir George Hume, and Sir Robert Melvil." —"Tush, tush," said the King; "a better man than you, Bothwell, shall answer for Sir Robert."—"I deny that," insolently retorted Bothwell; "unless the man you mean is your Majesty himself." This was a home-thrust, for it had been long suspected that the King was indirectly implicated in the fate of Murray; and when the Earl proceeded to charge the Erskines with the conspiracy for escape, nothing could equal James' indignation, and all hopes of a reconciliation seemed at an end.[1] It was in vain that the ministers of the Kirk were summoned to promote peace: they prevailed nothing; and, as a last resource, Bowes the English Ambassador was called in. With matchless effrontery he declared his mistress' astonishment at the enterprise of Bothwell; regretted the facility with which so treasonable an invasion had been pardoned; and expressed her anxiety for the safety of the King's person, and the preservation of the country from rebellion. James answered, that it was not for him to answer for the enterprise of Bothwell. He was no accomplice, but its victim; and for the traitors who now kept him, they had forsworn themselves, and broken every promise. Was he not prevented from free access to his own palace of Falkland? Had they

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 16th August, 1593.

not imprisoned five of his servants, and demanded the trial of the Chancellor, the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume? and when he asked why, insolently answered—that they might be hanged.[1] But let them look to themselves. He might seem in a helpless state; but he was their King: and sooner would he suffer his hand to be cut from his wrist than sign any letter of remission at their imperious bidding; sooner endure the extremity of death, than consent to live a captive, and in dishonour. Bowes assured him of his mistress' sympathy; advised an amicable settlement; and at last, after two days' labour, with the assistance of some mediators selected from the ministers, the judges of the Session, and the chief magistrates of the city, succeeded in bringing the parties to an agreement.

During the whole of these conferences, the King appears to have behaved with such unwonted spirit and resolution, that it is evident he must have been assured of a large party, and of near and speedy succour. He declared, in sharp terms, to the ministers of the Kirk, that he would either be once more a free monarch and released from these traitors, or proclaim himself a captive: and he charged them, on their allegiance, to let his mind be known to his people; to exhort them to procure his delivery by force; and to assure them he would hazard his life to attain it.[2] When Athol proposed himself to be appointed Lieutenant-governor in the North, with full power

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 16th Aug. 1593.
[2] Id. Ibid.

against Huntly, and Bothwell claimed the same high office in the South, James, almost with contempt, refused both the one and the other; but he consented to pardon Bothwell and his associates, for all his attempts against his person; and agreed that Lord Hume, the Chancellor Thirlstane, the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume, should not repair to Court till the conclusion of the Parliament, which was to meet within a month or six weeks, at Stirling.[1] Nothing, however, was farther from the King's intention than the fulfilment of these promises, which he knew he could at any future time disregard and pronounce invalid, as extorted by force; and before such time arrived, he hoped to be able to muster a party which might defy his enemies, and secure that revenge which was only to prove the deeper, because it was dissembled and deferred. Meanwhile, with that elasticity and levity with which he could cover his gravest purposes, he resumed his gaiety, partook of a banquet at Bothwell's house in Leith, appeared wholly bent on his pastime, and rode to Inchmurrin to hunt fallow-deer.[2]

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. Accord betwixt the King of Scots, and Earl Bothwell, 14th Aug., 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 16th Aug., 1593.

CHAP. III.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1593—1594.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Pope.*
Elizabeth.	Henry IV.	Rodolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Clement VIII.

In the late revolution James had exhibited unusual firmness; and this last compromise with Bothwell was almost a victory. Nor was he deceived in his expectations of still farther triumph over this insolent noble, whom he now justly regarded as the leader of the English party and of the Kirk. The resolution and courage which the King had exhibited, convinced his turbulent barons that he was no longer a minor, or a puppet, to be tossed about from faction to faction, and made the helpless and passive instrument of their ambition. Many of them, therefore, began to attach themselves to the royal faction, from self-interest rather than loyalty; and however fatal to the peace of the country, the deadly feuds which existed amongst the nobles, by preventing combination, formed the strength of the monarch at this moment. It was evident that Bothwell had either

deceived Elizabeth or himself, when he spoke to Carey and Mathews of his overwhelming strength, and the facility with which he could guide the government of Scotland according to the wishes of his renowned Empress. Already his ally, the Duke of Lennox, young, capricious, and a favourite of James, began to waver; and before the appointed Convention met at Stirling on the 9th of September, a powerful reaction had taken place, which no efforts of English intrigue could arrest. It was in vain that Elizabeth, Burghley, and Sir Robert Cecil his son, who now acted as a chief councillor in all "Scottish causes," exerted themselves to keep up a faction, and even entered into a secret communication with Huntly and the Popish party, in the vain hope of bringing about a coalition between them and Bothwell. The effort to join with the Roman Catholics, whom they had so often stigmatized as enemies to the truth, only served to show the fraud and falsehood of Elizabeth's and Cecil's constantly-repeated assertion, that they were guided solely by zeal for the glory of God and the interests of the true religion; and Bowes the Ambassador assured them, that if the plot for this unnatural combination went forward, the ministers of the Kirk, from whom it could not be concealed, would "greatly wonder and start thereat."[1] Besides, how was he to

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 6th Sept., 1593. As this fact is new, and shows the insincerity of Elizabeth and Burghley, and the sincerity and honesty of the Kirk, proving, also, that Bothwell's party was the party of the Kirk, I give the passage from Bowes' letter.

"The party employed to sound Chanus [Huntly] and his com-

reconcile the course now recommended with his instructions to prosecute the Papistical rebels? How could he allow Huntly's uncle, a priest and a Jesuit, to steal quietly out of Scotland, and yet satisfy the Kirk and the Protestant leaders, that he (Bowes) was an enemy to the idolaters? All this needed to be reconciled and explained; and he begged for speedy directions.[1]

We have seen how completely Bothwell had been supported and encouraged in his late audacious and treasonable enterprises by the English Queen. He was now to feel the fickleness of her favour: and with that deep hypocrisy which so often marked her political conduct, she addressed a letter to the King of Scots,

partners, how they stand affected to proceed in and perform their offers made for America [England,] letteth me know that he hath spoken with Chanus, and with such as tendered this offer for him and the rest; and that they will go forwards agreeable to the motions offered. For the which this party thus travelling herein hath promised to go forwards in his course with diligence, as all things may be effected with best expedition and secrecy, likeas it will be made known, I trust, to your Lordship, very shortly. I understand perfectly that Chanus [Huntly] will both impart to Petrea [King of Scots,] and also communicate to his partners, whatsoever shall be concredited to his trust and secrecy; and I believe, verily, that his partners, binding up with Argomartes [Bothwell,] shall acquaint him therewith. Further, this cannot be kept from the ears of the vi m £86£6 [Kirk] here, who will greatly start and wonder hereat. Therefore I beseech your Lordship that this may be well considered." Bowes very naturally goes on to observe, that this course of friendship with the Catholics is inconsistent with his instructions, which commanded him to prosecute the "Papistical rebels."

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 6th Sept., 1593.

and instructions to Bowes, in which she stigmatized the Scottish earl as guilty of an abominable fact, which moved her utmost abhorrence; and expressed her unfeigned astonishment, that any subject who had acted thus insolently, had not only escaped without chastisement, but had received, as it appeared, a remission of such atrocious conduct. She alluded also, with scorn and indignation, to his refusal to prosecute those "notable traitors of the North"—Huntly, Errol, and Angus, "who had conspired among themselves, and agreed to admit great forces of strangers to enter into his realm, to the ruin of his estate and the subversion of religion;" and she warned him that such sudden changes as had been brought to her ears, such capriciousness and imbecility of judgment, would end not only in the loss of his liberty, but might endanger his life.[1] It did not suit James' policy or circumstances to tear the veil from these pretences at this moment; and, indeed, we are not certain that, however he may have suspected Elizabeth's double-dealing, he had detected it with anything of the certainty with which we can now unravel her complicated intrigues. At all events, he chose to fight her with her own crafty weapons, and pretended to Bowes that he was fully satisfied with her late assurances of friendship. When the appointed Convention assembled at Stirling, Bothwell was commanded to absent himself from Court until the meeting of Parliament, which was fixed for the 14th of Novem-

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Orig. Draft of Her Majesty's Letter to Mr Bowes, 23d August, 1593.

ber; at which time, the King intimated his intention of granting him a full pardon and restitution to his estates and honours, upon his submitting himself to the royal mercy.[1] He was then to leave the realm, but enjoy his revenues in his banishment; and his accomplices in his late treasons were to be pardoned.

Such terms, with which the rebel earl was compelled to be contented, exhibited a wonderful and rapid change in the power of the King; and all perceived where James' strength lay, when Lord Hume, with the Master of Glammis, and Sir George Hume of Primrose Know, entered Stirling during the Convention at the head of a large force. Everything was now changed, and the King spoke boldly out. He declared his resolution to cancel any promises extorted by force, when he was a captive; but promised mercy to all who repented and sued for pardon. He received Hume and his associates with open arms; sent for the Countess of Huntly to Court; permitted the Catholic earls, Angus and Errol, to visit their friends without molestation; and, it was strongly reported, had consented to have a secret interview with Huntly at Falkland.[2] This northern earl had recently received great promises from Spain; and for the last eight months had maintained a large force, with which he had repeatedly ravaged the territories of his enemy

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 10th September, 1593. Same to same, 15th September, 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 15th September, 1593. Also, Ibid. BC., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 13th Sept., 1593.

Argyll, and kept the whole of that country in terror and subjection. This constant exercise in war upon a larger scale than was commonly practised in Highland raids, had made him an experienced soldier; and James felt that, with such leaders as Huntly and Hume, he need not dread Bothwell, Athol, or their allies. All this rendered the King formidable; and soon after his triumph became complete by the arrival of his old and experienced councillor, the Chancellor Thirlstane, who, having been reconciled to the Queen, the Master of Glammis, the Duke of Lennox, and his other enemies, rode to Court, accompanied by young Cessford and two hundred horse.[1]

Measures now followed rapidly, of such a character as convinced the friends of England, the ministers of the Kirk, and the relics of Bothwell's party, that the King had not forgotten the late insults which had been offered him, and was preparing to take an ample revenge. Hume, a Roman Catholic, was made the Captain of the King's body-guard; and, in the King's presence, openly threw out his defiance against Bothwell and the whole race and name of the Stewarts; who, he said, dared not take one *sillie bee* out of the moss in his bounds without his will.[2] In these sallies he was not only unchecked by the King, but James, calling for the ministers, insisted that the process of excommunication, which was then preparing against this potent

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 21st September, 1593. Moyse's Memoirs, Bannat. ed., p. 105.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 13th Sept., 1593.

baron, should be abandoned, alleging that he was in the progress of conversion. It was remarked, too, that the three Catholic earls, although still excluded from Court, carried themselves with unwonted bravery and confidence. Angus, visiting Morton at the Newhouse in Fife, assured him that he had better join them in time, as their increasing strength would soon compel a union; and George Ker, the victim of the Spanish Blanks, who had not been heard of since his escape from Edinburgh castle, suddenly showed himself at Melvil, near Dalkeith, with a troop of eighty horse, and warned the tenants of Lord Ross to cease from their labour, if they would not have their houses burnt above their heads. It will be remembered that Ross's men had assisted in the capture of Ker; and their master, as was usual in those days, had been rewarded by a grant of Melvil, and other lands round Newbottle belonging to the Kers. These were trifling events; but noted at the time in the pulpit, when the watchmen of the Kirk were keenly detecting how the current of Court favour was setting in towards Popery.[1]

There is no good ground for suspecting, notwithstanding the strong asseverations of the ministers to the contrary, that the King of Scots had ever any serious intentions of becoming a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, or even of permitting its public profession by any one of his subjects; but he was well aware of the unprincipled policy of the English

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 5th Oct., 1593. See supra, p. 76.

Queen, which, from first to last, had been directed to weaken Scotland, by creating perpetual divisions amongst its nobles; and he had resolved, now that he was once more a free Prince, and at the head of a strong party, to extinguish the fires which she had kindled, and restore, if possible, aristocratic union and general peace to the country. That such was his present object is evident from a passage in a letter of Mr Carey the Governor of Berwick, son of Lord Hunsdon, to Lord Burghley; and the fervent hope expressed by this English baron, that the day may never arrive which shall see the Scottish nobles "linked together in peace," is full of meaning. "For the news in Scotland," says he, "I know not well what to say; but this I am sure,—the King doth too much *appose*[1] himself to the Papist faction for our good, I fear. Yet here [he means in the Border districts] is nothing but peace and seeking to link all the nobility together, which I hope will never be. The Papists do only bear sway; and the King hath none to put in trust with his own body but them. What will come of this your Lordship's wisdom can best discern; and thus much I know certain, that it were good your Lordship looked well whom you trust: for the King and the nobility of Scotland have too good intelligence out of our Court of England."[2]

In prosecution of this design of a general union

[1] "Appose," (*ad-pono*, or *appono*,) place himself beside; assimilate himself to the faction.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 29th Sept., 1593.

amongst his divided nobility, James opposed himself to the violent and persecuting measures of the Kirk. He knew the truth of what Bothwell had lately stated to Elizabeth, that the Scottish Catholics were so strong that, in the event of any attempt to unite them with the Protestants, they would soon rule all.[1] Since then, Huntly and his friends had been daily gaining complete preëminence in the North; and to render such a party furious or desperate by processes of treason and proscription,—to discharge against them, if they did not choose at once to renounce their religion and sign the Presbyterian Confession of Faith, the sharpest arrows of civil and ecclesiastical vengeance, would have been the extremity of intolerance and of folly. The King wisely declined this, and persevered in his course; although the Presbyterian pulpits immediately opened their fire, and the provincial Assembly of Fife was convened at St Andrews to consult on the imminent dangers which surrounded the Kirk.[2]

Of this religious convention Mr James Melvil, nephew of the well-known Andrew Melvil, was chosen Moderator; and Mr John Davison, the sternest and most zealous amongst his brethren, did not hesitate to arraign the pastors of the Kirk of coldness, self-seeking, and negligence. Let them repent, said he, and betake themselves to their ordinary armour—fasting and prayer. Let the whole Kirk concur in this needful

[1] MS. St. P. Off. B.C., Dean Toby Mathews to Lord Burghley, 2d August, 1593.

[2] MS. Calderwood, Sloan MSS., Brit. Mus., 4738, fol. 1140, 26th Sept.

humiliation. Above all, let the rebel earls, Huntly, Errol, Angus, Auchendown, and their accomplices, whom it were idle to assail with any lighter censures, be solemnly excommunicated; and let a grave message of pastors, barons, and burgesses, carry their resolution to the King, now so deeply alienated from the good cause: then they might look for better times. But now their sins called for humiliation: for they, the shepherds, seemed to have forgotten their flocks: they were idle and profane; nor would he be far from the truth, if he declared that a great part of their pastors were at this moment the merriest and the carelessest men in Scotland. After much debate, it was resolved that the Roman Catholic rebels should be excommunicated; and this upon the ground that many amongst them had been formerly students in the university of St Andrews, and must, therefore, have signed the Confession of Faith. The terms of this sentence, in which not the whole Presbyterian sect, as represented by the General Assembly of their Kirk, but an isolated provincial Synod took upon them to excommunicate certain members of the Catholic Church, were very awful. This little conclave declared that, in name and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, they cut off the said persons from their Communion, and delivered them to Satan, to the destruction of their flesh,: it added,—that the Spirit might yet be safe, if it pleased God to reclaim them by repentance; but pronounced, if unrepentant, their just and everlasting condemnation.[1] This sentence was com-

[1] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1144.

manded to be intimated in every Kirk in the kingdom. All persons, of whatever rank or degree, were interdicted from concealing or holding communication with the delinquents thus delivered to the Devil, under the penalty of being visited by the same anathema; and the Synod concluded by exhorting the pastors to whom the charge of the flock had been intrusted, to prepare themselves by abstinence, prayer, and diligent study of the Word, for that general and solemn Fast which was judged most needful to be observed throughout the land. The causes for such universal humiliation and intercession were declared to be these:—[1]

1. The impunity of Idolatry, and cruel murder committed by the Earl of Huntly and his complices.

2. The impunity of the monstrous, ungodly, and unnatural treasons of Huntly, Angus, Errol, the Laird Auchendown, Sir James Chisholm, and their accomplices.

3. The pride, boldness, malice, blasphemy, and going forward of these enemies in their most pernicious purpose, arising out of the said impunity, and their sufferance by the King; so that now they not only have no doubt, as they speak plainly, to obtain liberty of conscience, but also brag to make the Kirk fain to come to their cursed Idolatry before they come to the truth.

4. The land defiled in divers places with the devilish and blasphemous Mass.

5. The wrath of God broken forth in fiery flame upon the north and south parts of the land with

[1] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1142.

horrible judgments, both of souls and bodies, threatening the mid part with the like or heavier, if repentance prevent not.

6. The King's slowness in repressing Papistry and planting of true religion.

7. The defection of so many noblemen, barons, gentlemen, merchants, and mariners, by the bait of Spanish gain; which emboldeneth the enemies: and on the other part the multitude of Atheists, ignorant, sacrilegious, blood-thirsty, and worldly-outward professors, with whom it is a strange matter that God should work any good turn; the consideration whereof upon the part of man may altogether discourage us.

8. The cruel slaughter of ministers.[1]

9. The pitiful estate of the Kirk and brethren of France.

10. and Lastly. The hot persecution of discipline by the tyranny of bishops in our neighbour land.[2]

In addition to these bold proceedings, the leading ministers of the Kirk determined that Lord Hume the Captain of the King's Guard, should either satisfy the Kirk by his recantation, or be forthwith excommunicated. They publicly rebuked the Earl of Morton for keeping company with Errol and Angus, men branded by the Kirk as idolaters; and when he defended himself by quoting the example of Henry the Fourth, the French King recently turned Catholic,

[1] Mr James Blyth and Mr John Aikman, ministers, had been slain by the Mures.

[2] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, fol. 1142.

they retorted that no Christian could, without error, associate with such delinquents.[1]

Meanwhile, Bothwell, instead of accepting the King's offered pardon and retiring from the realm, entered into fresh intrigues with England and trifled with the royal mercy.[2] But James detected these new combinations; and marching suddenly in person with a strong force from Stirling to the Doune of Menteith, where Athol, Gowrie, and Montrose had assembled with five hundred horse, attacked their company, made Gowrie and Montrose prisoners, and had nearly taken or slain the northern earl, who fled at his utmost speed with a few attendants into Athol.[3]

The three Catholic earls, Huntly, Errol, and Angus, now earnestly supplicated the King, that they might be permitted to stand their trial for that conspiracy of the "Spanish Blanks," of which they solemnly protested their innocence. No opportunity, they said, had hitherto been given them of defending themselves before a jury. They had been excommunicated by the Kirk, banished from Court, and compelled to lead the life of fugitives and traitors, without any evidence except a confession extorted by torture, and the exhibition of some signatures asserted to be theirs, but which they would prove to be forgeries. Let them

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 15th Sept., 1593. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 26th Sept., 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., James Sinclair and James Douglas of Spot to Bothwell, 1st Oct., 1593. Ibid., Lord Ochiltree to Bothwell, 4th Oct., 1593.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 5th Oct., 1593.

only come to their trial. If found guilty, they were ready to suffer the penalty of their crimes; if acquitted, as they trusted to be, then they would either satisfy the Kirk on the subject of their religion and conform to the national faith, or would go into voluntary banishment.[1] Not satisfied with these remonstrances, they suddenly presented themselves to the King as he rode from Holyrood to Lauder, and, falling on their knees, implored him to submit their alleged offences to the judgment of an assize. But James dismissed them with real or affected wrath; threatening that they should be worse handled for such boldness.[2]

Had the Catholic earls been sincere in the anxiety they expressed to have an impartial trial, it would have been the height of injustice to have refused their request; but it was well known that they had secretly summoned all their friends to assemble in arms on "their day of law;" and such was their present strength, that neither judges, jury, nor witnesses, could have attended with safety.[3] It is not surprising that the Kirk should have loudly remonstrated against such hurried and premature proceedings; and at an ecclesiastical convention of ministers, barons, and burghs, held at Edinburgh on the 17th October, for the purpose of considering the imminency of the threatened danger, they selected six commissioners to repair to the palace and present their advice, be-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 9th Oct., 1593.
[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 12th Oct., 1593.
[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 18th Oct., 1593.

seeching the King that the trial might be delayed till the "professors of the gospel should be ripely advised what was meetest for them to do, since they had resolved to be the principal accusers of these noblemen in their foul treasons." They craved, also, that these excommunicated and treasonable apostates should, "according to the loveable laws and customs of Scotland, be imprisoned till the Estates of Parliament had advised on the manner of their trial; that the jury should be nominated not by the accused but by the accusers; that as the foresaid traitors were excommunicated and cut off from the society of Christ's body, (to use the strong and revolting language of the original,) they should not be admitted to trial, or have any benefit of the law, till they were again joined unto Christ and reconciled to his Kirk." These, however, were not all the demands and proceedings of the Kirk. They resolved, that if their enemies attended in arms, they should meet them in the same fashion; desiring the King's permission that "the professors of religion may be his Majesty's guard, and be admitted in the most fensible and warlike manner to be about the royal person, to defend it from violence, and accuse their enemies to the uttermost: and this," they added, "we are minded to do, although it should be with the loss of all our lives in one day: for certainly we are determined that the country shall not bruik us and them baith, so long as they are God's professed enemies."[1] In futherance

[1] MS. St. P. Off. Certain Petitions and Conclusions considered

of these preparations, the Kirk directed the Moderator of every Presbytery to advertise each particular brother in the ministry within their bounds; to warn the noblemen, gentlemen, barons, and burgesses, to muster in warlike arms and array in Perth, on the 24th of the month, the expected day of trial; and appointed twelve ministers as commissioners, to be resident in the capital till the answer to their demand was returned by the King.[1] When the Commissioners of the Kirk presented their petitions to James at Jedburgh, he refused to acknowledge any convention which had been summoned without his order; and after an angry interview, passed in mutual complaint and accusation, peremptorily declined returning any written reply to the Assembly. The state of matters now became alarming; and Bowes the English Ambassador, who watched it from hour to hour, wrote thus to Burghley on the 18th October:—"Yesterday, at the meeting of the Commissioners of the Kirk, the barons, and burghs, convened here together. * * Great preparations are made for the advancement of the course thus resolved, and to stop the trial to be given at this time to these earls, whose friends (as it is told me) have mustered, and are in readiness to come to Perth at the day limited: they have already provided that the Water Gate or Water Street shall be reserved for the earls and their companies. But Athol, Gowrie, and many of the town,

upon by the Commissioners for the Kirk, Barons, and Burgesses of Edinburgh, 17th Oct., 1593.

[1] Ibid.

are rather disposed to keep them out. The convocation and access of people to that place is looked upon to be so great that thereon bloody troubles shall arise."[1]

A collision appeared now inevitable; and many causes promised to make it, when it did occur, one of a fearful description. The opposite factions, whose partisans were flocking from all parts towards Perth, the anticipated scene of the trial, were animated by the most bitter and revengeful feelings; their blood was boiling under the influence of family feuds, religious persecution, and fanatical hatred. The advocates for peace were browbeaten, and their voices drowned in the din of arms and proclamations of mutual defiance; and all this was exasperated and increased by the warlike denunciations of the Kirk, which, by its thousand trumpet-tongues, through the length and breadth of the land, summoned all who loved the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to gird on their weapons, and, if necessary, die for their faith. Had things been allowed to continue in this state, and the muster taken place at Perth, a few days more might have kindled the flames of civil war in the country, and deluged it with blood; but at this crisis James wisely interdicted the trial from being held at Perth, and resolved that a solemn inquiry into the conduct of Huntly, Angus, and Errol, should take place before commissioners to be selected from the nobility, the burghs, and the Kirk. To secure tranquillity, public proclamation was made that none

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 20th Oct., 1593.

except such as were especially called for should presume to attend the convention; that the three earls, dismissing their forces, should await the King's determination at Perth; and that, in the mean season, none should molest them during the trial or inquiry which was about to take place. At all this the Kirk stood aghast. They had insisted on the imprisonment of the three earls. They had argued that, till they signed the Confession of Faith and reconciled themselves to the Kirk, they could not be recognised or permitted to take their trial; that they ought to have no counsel to defend them; and that the Kirk, as their accuser, should nominate the jury. Its ministers now complained, threatened, and remonstrated;[1] but when the day appointed for the convention arrived, they found the King not only resolved to abide by his own judgment, but so strongly supported by the nobility whom he had summoned, that it would be vain to attempt resistance.

James, who had taken time to consider all coolly, on weighing the whole circumstances, found it necessary to steer a middle course. The trial was postponed; as it was believed that no jury could be found at that moment "so void of favour and partiality" as to condemn the earls; and, on the other hand, if acquitted, no terms or conditions could be imposed on them which their power would not enable them to despise and infringe.[2] As to the accused themselves: on the one hand, they

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 12th Nov., 1593. Also, same to same, 17th Nov., 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 23d Nov., 1593.

persisted in asserting their innocence as to the "Spanish Blanks," which they were accused of having signed, or of any conspiracy to bring foreign forces into the realm; on the other, they confessed that they had received Jesuits, heard Mass, revolted from the Presbyterian faith against their public profession and subscription; refused to obey their summons for treason; and committed other acts against the laws; for which they were willing, they said, to put themselves in the King's mercy. All this was laid before a committee who represented the three Estates—nobles, barons, and burghs. The Duke of Lennox and the Earl of Mar appearing for the earls; the Lord Chancellor Thirlstane and Lord Livingston for the lords, with whom sat all the councillors of estate; the barons being represented by four of their number, the burghs by five burgesses, and the Kirk by six of the leading ministers; who, however, appeared only as petitioners, and did not sit or vote as commissioners. After mature deliberation with this committee, the King, adopting, as far as he was permitted, a wise mean between the extremity of persecution recommended by the Kirk, and that toleration which was rather implored and hoped for than claimed as a right by the Catholics, pronounced his sentence. He declared that he was firmly resolved that God's true religion, publicly preached, and by law established, during the first year of his reign, should alone be professed by the whole body of his subjects; and that all who had not embraced it, or who had made defection from it, should, before the 1st of February

next, obey the laws by professing it, and thus satisfy the Kirk; or, if they found this against their conscience, should depart the realm to such parts beyond seas as he should direct, there to remain till they embraced the true religion, and were reconciled to the Kirk; but he added, that during this banishment they should enjoy their lands and living. As to those persons who had been accused of a treasonable conspiracy with Spain for the overthrow of the true religion—William Earl of Angus, George Earl of Huntly, Francis Earl of Errol, Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, and Sir James Chisholm of Cornileys—he pronounced them "free, and unaccusable in all time coming of any such crimes;" and annulled all legal proceedings which had been instituted against them, "unless they showed themselves unworthy of pardon by directly renewing their intrigues, or threatening, either by word or deed, any repetition of their treason. If they chose to renounce their Idolatry, to embrace the Presbyterian opinions, satisfy the Kirk, and remain to enjoy their estates and honours within their own land, it was intimated to them and to all other Catholics, that this must be done on or before the 1st day of February next; and, on the contrary, if they preferred to retain their faith and enter into exile, then they were to give assurance that, during its continuance, they should refrain from all practices with Jesuits or seminary priests against their native country. It was lastly declared, that they should express to the King and the Kirk their acceptance

of one or other of these conditions before the 1st of January next.[1]

To our modern and more Christian feelings this sentence must appear as unwise as unmerciful: for it disavowed the possibility of toleration, held out a premium to religious hypocrisy, and punished sincerity and honesty of opinion with perpetual banishment. James had hoped that it might pacify the country; but it experienced the common fate of middle courses, and gave satisfaction to no party. The Catholics, who had never intermitted their intrigues with Spain, had lately received assistance and encouragement from that country; they commanded almost the whole of the North; and were in no temper to resign their religion, or retain it at the expense of perpetual exile. They temporised, therefore; affected a submission which they did not feel; and continued to strengthen themselves both at home and abroad for a new struggle. But if the Catholics were discontented, the Kirk received the Act of Abolition with mingled wrath and lamentation. It actually seemed to them an insufficient security, and a trifling punishment, that no man was to be permitted to remain within the realm, and enjoy his estate and the protection of the law, unless he signed the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. The profanation was, that any man should be at liberty to retain his belief in the Roman Catholic faith, and his Scottish estates, if he consented to banish

[1] MS. St. P. Off. Act of the Convention at Holyrood House, 26th Nov., 1593; with Burghley's notes on the margin. It is printed by Spottiswood, p. 400.

himself from his native country. The feelings of the leaders of the Kirk upon this subject are thus described by Bowes, an eyewitness, in his letter to Burghley.

"This edict, and act of oblivion, is thought to be very injurious to the Church, and far against the laws of God and this realm; whereupon the ministers have not only openly protested to the King and Convention that they will not agree to the same, but also, in their sermons, inveigh greatly against it; alleging that, albeit it hath a pretence to establish one true religion in the realm, yet liberty is given to all men to profess what they list, so they depart out of the realm; and thereby they shall enjoy greater privileges and advantages than any other good subject can do. That this is very dangerous to the religion, and to all the professors thereof, that the crimes of these offenders shall be thus slightly passed over; and this notwithstanding their treasons and faults are so manifest and odious, as the King once confessed that he had not power to pardon them, and promised, as he was a Christian prince, to punish them with all rigour. And the parties thus offending have now been detected four times, and escaped punishment for like treasons and conspiracies."[1]

At this Convention the King, who now found himself strong enough to disclose his true feelings, exhibited the sustained intensity of his wrath against Bothwell. It was in vain that the Queen, and those nobles who had attached themselves to her service, interceded for the delinquent. He was commanded

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 2d Dec. 1593.

to leave the realm within fifteen days; and James refused to listen to any offers, or to hold out the slightest hopes of forgiveness till this order had been obeyed. The friends of the rebel earl were treated with equal severity. Lords Doune and Spiny, with Mr John Russell, an eminent advocate who had pleaded his cause, were imprisoned; and it was evident that all hope of reconciliation must be abandoned.[1]

The act of oblivion proved as distasteful to Elizabeth as it was to either the Catholics or the Kirk. This great Princess had recently received intelligence of the continued intrigues carried on by Jesuits and seminary priests in Scotland. One of these busy emissaries, Thomas Mackquharry, a Scottish Jesuit, who had been employed by Lady Hume, and had carried on his secret practices in different parts of England, had been recently seized by Sir John Carey at Berwick. It was reported that another Scottish Jesuit, Mr James Gordon, with William Gordon of Strathdon, a brother of the Earl of Huntly, and four or five other Catholics, had passed over from Scotland to Dunkirk;[2] and Mr James Craig, a gentleman resident at Bourdeaux, wrote to his brother Mr Thomas Craig, the celebrated feudal lawyer, then an advocate at the Scottish bar,[3] that an army and fleet

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 2d Dec., 1593.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 24th Nov., 1593. Ibid., same to same, 2d Dec., 1593.

[3] MS. St. P. Off. The clause in the letter of James Craig at Bourdeaux, to his brother, Mr Thomas Craig, Advocate in Edinburgh.

were being equipt in Spain, which were suspected to be destined for Scotland. Ireland continued to be the theatre of perpetual intrigue and commotion; and the English Queen had taken the adoption of the Catholic faith by Henry the Fourth greatly to heart. She was, therefore, in a highly excited state when she received from Bowes, her Ambassador, the news from Scotland; and lost no time in despatching Lord Zouch with a violent open remonstrance, and a letter of secret rebuke, written wholly in her own hand.[1] This last was in these nervous and scornful terms:

"My dear Brother.—To see so much, I rue my sight that views the evident spectacle of a seduced King, abusing council, and wry-guided kingdom. My love to your good and hate of your ruin, breeds my heedful regard of your surest safety. If I neglected you, I could wink at your worst, and yet withstand my enemies' drifts. But be you persuaded by sisters. I will advise you, void of all guile, and will not stick to tell you, that if you tread the path you chuse,[2] I will pray for you, but leave you to your harms.

"I doubt whether shame or sorrow have had the upper hand when I read your last lines to me. Who, of judgment, that deemed me not simple, could suppose that any answers you have writ me should satisfy, nay, enter into the opinion of any one not void of four senses, leaving out the first.

"Those of whom you have had so evident proof by their actual rebellion in the field you preserve,

[1] Camden, Elizabeth in Kennet, vol. ii.

[2] In the copy in the St. P. Off., "the path you are in."

whose offers you knew then so large to foreign Princes. And now, at last, when, plainest of all, was taken the carrier himself, confessing all before many commissioners and divers councillors; because you slacked the time till he was escaped, and now must seem deny it, (though all men knew it;) therefore, forsooth, no jury can be found for them. May this blind me that knows what a King's office were to do? Abuse not yourself so far. Indeed, when a weak bowing and a slack seat in government shall appear, then bold spirits will stir the stern, and guide the ship to greatest wreck, and will take heart to supply the failure.

"Assure yourself no greater peril can ever befal you, nor any King else, than to take for payment evil accounts; for they deride such, and make their prey of their neglect. There is no Prince alive, but if he show fear or yielding but he shall have tutors enough, though he be out of minority. And when I remember what sore punishment those so lewd traitors should have, then I read again, lest at first I mistook your mind; but when the reviewing granted my lecture true, Lord! what wonder grew in me that you should correct them with benefits who deserve much severer correction. Could you please them more than save their lives and make them shun the place they hate, where they are sure that their just deserved haters dwell, and yet as much enjoy their honours and livelihoods, as if for sporting travel they were licensed to visit other countries? Call you this a banishment—to be rid of whom they fear and go

to such they love? Now, when my eyes read more, then smiled I to see how childish, foolish, and witless an excuse the best of either three made you, turning their treasons' bills to artificers' reckonings with *items* for many expenses, and lacked but one billet which they best deserved, an *item* for so much for the cord whose office they best merited. Is it possible that you can swallow the taste of so bitter a drug, more meet to purge you of them, than worthy for your Kingly acceptance? I never heard a more deriding scorn; and vow that, if but this alone, were I you, they should learn a short lesson.

"'"The best that I commend in your letter is, that I see your judgment too good to affirm a truth of their speech, but that alone they so say. Howbeit, I muse how you can want a law to such, as whose denial, if it were ever, could serve to save their lives, whose treasons are so plain; as the messenger who would for his own sake not devise it, if for truth's cause he had it not in his charge: for who should ever be tried false, if his own denial might save his life? In Princes' causes many circumstances yield a sufficient plea for such a King as will have it known: and ministers they shall lack none, that will not themselves gainsay it. Leave off such cloaks, therefore, I pray you; they will be found too thin to save you from wetting. For your own sake play the King, and let your subjects see you respect yourself, and neither to hide or to suffer danger and dishonour. And that you may know my opinion, judgment, and advice, I have chosen this nobleman, whom I know wise, religious, and

honest; to whom I pray you give full credit, as if myself were with you; and bear with all my plainness, whose affection, if it were not more worthy than so oft not followed, I would not have gone so far. But blame my love if it exceed any limits. Beseeching God to bless you from the advices of them that more prize themselves than care for you, to whom I wish many years of reign."[1]

It was not to be expected that a letter like this, containing so much disagreeable advice and cutting sarcasm, and which in its involved, but often energetic and condensed periods, affords so good a specimen of Elizabeth's private epistolary style, should have been acceptable to James; but when Lord Zouch presented it at his audience on the 13th January,[2] the King dissembled his chagrin and received him with apparent courtesy. He professed his anxious desire to live on terms of amity with his good sister: observed, that as for the Act of Abolition to the Catholic earls which her Majesty disliked so much, it was now itself abolished by their not accepting it, and he was entirely free from any agreement. He knew, he said, in answer to Zouch's remonstrances on his supposed Spanish predilections, what it was to lose an old friend and to trust a new. As to the

[1] This interesting letter is now printed (for the first time) from the original, in the Queen's own hand, preserved in the collections of Sir George Warrender. There is a contemporary copy in the State Paper Office.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 15th January, 1593-4. Ibid., Lord Zouch to Burghley. Also, MS. Letter, Brit. Mus., Caligula, D II. 169.

councillors, of whom she complained, he must confide in his Council as she confided in hers; but he was the last who would suffer any ill affected to insinuate themselves amongst his ministers.[1]

With these general assurances, Elizabeth's Ambassador would not be satisfied. He called on the King for deeds, not words; insisted that his royal mistress was entitled to have an express written declaration of the course which the King was determined to follow with the rebel earls and the Catholic party, still busy in their plots for the invasion of England and the destruction of their common faith;[2] and lamented, in his letter to Lord Burghley, that he was utterly unfit to cope with the difficulties which met him on every hand. The Lord Chancellor Maitland, whom he was taught to consider the wisest and most upright of the King's councillors, plotted, as he suspected, against him; and had received, it was said, great sums of money from the Catholic faction. He was surrounded by falsehood and suspicion; distracted by contrary reports; and so strictly watched, that none came near him but those whom the King permitted.

All this, however, did not prevent Zouch from fulfilling the more secret part of his instructions; nor, although he affected to be deeply shocked with the political profligacy and dissimulation of the Scot-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Zouch to Burghley, 15th Jan., 1593-4. Also, Ibid., same to the same, 26th January, 1593-4.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 27th January, 1593-4. Also, Ibid. B.C., Mr John Carey to Burghley, 25th January, 1593-4.

tish nobles, was he himself by any means a novice in intrigue. Whilst assuring James of Elizabeth's unshaken friendship and zeal for his welfare, he opened a communication with his bitter foe, the fierce and reckless Bothwell; and arranged with this earl, John Colvil brother of the Laird of Wemyss, Henry Lock an agent of Sir Robert Cecil, and some of the most violent ministers of the Kirk, a new plot for the surprise of the King. It was resolved that Athol and Argyll, with the whole strength of the North, should advance to Edinburgh; form a junction with the forces of Bothwell, Montrose, Ochiltree, and the Laird of Johnston; and attacking the Chancellor Maitland, Lord Hume, and the friends of the King, at once destroy Huntly and the Roman Catholics, save James from evil counsellors, and take an ample revenge for the murder of the Earl of Murray.[1] These designs were the more unjustifiable at this moment, as the monarch had adopted strong measures against the Roman Catholic earls. He had declared them excluded from all benefits of the Act of Abolition; had summoned them, on the penalty of being outlawed, to deliver themselves up, and take their trials for treason; called a Parliament, which was to be held in April; appointed a new Council of more neutral and well affected nobles and barons; and had professed to Elizabeth, in a written answer to Zouch's instructions, his continued desire of friendship and good faith.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lord Zouch to Burghley, 15th Jan., 1593-4. Also, MS. Brit. Mus., Caligula, D II., 151, Instructions for Lord Zouch for treating with certain Lords in Scotland,

In an interview, also, which Bowes the resident Ambassador had with James' great adviser the Chancellor Maitland, the Scottish lord assured him that his royal mistress need not distress herself with suspicions of his master. He was steadfast, he affirmed, in his religion, whatever Papists or the Kirk might affirm: nothing would induce him to embrace the Spanish courses; and for an invasion of England, he knew it would be madness.[1] Yet Zouch continued his plots; and Elizabeth undoubtedly gave them her secret encouragement; although, with her usual caution and parsimony, she abstained from any large advances either in money or troops.

In the midst of these intrigues and dangers a joyful event occurred. The Queen brought forth a son, her first child, in the castle of Stirling, on the 19th February; and the monarch immediately committed the charge and government of the infant heir to the throne, to the Earl of Mar, captain and keeper of the castle of Stirling; "whose uncle and goodsire, (it is stated in the Act of Appointment,) by three descents together, have had the custody and governance of the sovereign Princes of this realm."[2] By the nation this event was hailed with universal joy: an old chronicle declaring that "the people, in all parts,

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 8th Jan., 1593-4. Ibid., same to same, 15th Jan., 1593-4. Also, Ibid., same to same, 20th Jan., 1593-4. Also, MS. St. P. Off., "Councillors newly established by the King of Scots," 17th Jan., 1593-4; in Burghley's handwriting. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Burghley, 20th Jan., 1593-4. Also, Brit. Mus., Caligula, D II., 169, 182.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., 21st February, 1593, Lord of Mar anent the keeping of the young Prince.

appeared to be daft for mirth."[1] But scarcely was the child born ere he became a mark for treachery; the conspirators proposing to Lord Zouch, that when they advanced on Stirling, they should strengthen their hands by seizing the infant heir to the Crown, and thus extort better terms from the King. It was a game which had already been played in the days of James the Third. The English Ambassador, however, protested against such an outrage, and his associates did not dare to disobey.

All was now ripe for Bothwell's attempt; but the King proved too crafty and strong for his adversaries. He had received secret information of the plot; seized a gentleman of Zouch's suite, who had communicated with the traitors; commanded Lord Hume, Cessford, and Buccleugh, to concentrate their strength at Kelso, where it was expected the enemy would cross the Border; imprisoned some of the boldest and busiest ministers of the Kirk; and addressing the people in the High Church of Edinburgh after the sermon, informed them, in stirring terms, of the insolence of Bothwell, that audacious rebel, who was at that moment on his way to attack his lawful Prince; declared his resolution to lead his whole force in person against him; and, raising his hand to heaven, took a solemn vow to God, that if they, for their part, would instantly arm and advance with him into the field, he, for his, would never rest till, in return for such service, he had utterly suppressed and banished the Catholic lords

[1] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 113.

from his dominions.[1] Scarcely had James ended this appeal, when word was brought that Bothwell, who had out-manœuvred Hume and Buccleugh, was at hand, at Leith, with six hundred horse, awaiting the junction of Athol and Argyll, whom he expected to cross the Forth with their northern strength, and showing intentions of intrenching himself within the old fortifications on the Links. Without a moment's delay, the King assembled his troops, and marched against him. The advance consisted of a thousand pikemen and five hundred horse; the rear, of the infantry of the city of Edinburgh, in number about a thousand musketeers; and besides these, there were three guns covered by a body of two hundred horse. Despairing of being able to withstand such a force within the intrenchments, Bothwell retired deliberately, and in good order, in a south-easterly direction, round the roots of the hill of Arthur Seat, towards Niddry, where he halted on a neighbouring field, which offered him an excellent position. James, observing this movement, now dreaded an attack of his capital on the south side, where it was undefended; and ordering Hume, at the head of the cavalry, to advance to Niddry, countermarched through Edinburgh, and took up his ground with the remainder of the troops on the Borough Muir. Meanwhile Hume and Glammis had reached a hill beside Niddry, and were hesitating to make the onset, when Bothwell, Lord Ochiltree, and the gentlemen with them, "after prayers on their knees," assailed them with

[1] Historie of James the Sext, p. 304.

loud shouts of "God and the Kirk," drove them from their ground, slew twelve of their troopers, and chased them to within a short distance of the spot where the King stood. They then sounded their trumpets, and retired in good order by Craigmillar without losing a man. In this onset, Bothwell took Hume's cornet and trumpet, to whom he gave his liberty; and presenting him with two rose nobles, sent, by him, a challenge to his master.[1] This defeat took place on an eminence beside Niddry, called Edmeston Edge.[2] Bothwell now retreated to Kelso; and aware of the hopelessness of his enterprise, soon after dispersed his company, and became once more a refugee in England.

The King, delivered for the present from all apprehensions on this quarter, now determined to fulfil his promise, and deprive the Queen of England and the ministers of the Kirk of all pretence of opposition, by adopting the most vigorous proceedings against the Catholic earls, Huntly, Angus, and Errol. Proclamation was made, that these noble-

[1] We learn from Henry Lock's letter to Sir Robert, describing the "raid," and written from Berwick only two days after the action, that before they charged their adversaries, Bothwell and his companions exclaimed, that "that day her Majesty should see proof of their intentions and faith." MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Henry Lock to Sir R. Cecil, 5th April, 1594. By a letter from Bowes to Burghley of 13th April, 1594, St. P. Off., and another, of the same date, from Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, we learn, that the management of Scottish affairs, owing to the increasing infirmities of Lord Burghley, had been intrusted, by the Queen, to his son Sir Robert Cecil, one of the Privy Council.

[2] Moyse's Memoirs, p. 115.

men should appear and take their trial before the Parliament to be held in May. The whole force of his realm was summoned to meet him in arms, to be led against the rebels if they resisted; and Colvil of Easter Wemyss, one of the best military leaders then in Scotland, with Mr Edward Bruce, an influential minister of the Kirk, were despatched on an embassy to Elizabeth. The general object of their mission was to assure her of their master's resolute determination to reduce the Catholic earls, and for ever put an end to the Spanish intrigues; but before proceeding to any other point, they were enjoined to remonstrate, in the strongest terms, against the support lately given in England to the King's avowed rebel, the Earl of Bothwell. We have seen the bitter and sarcastic letter which Elizabeth, three months before, had sent to the King by the Lord Zouch. It was now his time to reply to it, and have his revenge; which he did by the following private epistle, intrusted to his Ambassadors, written wholly in his own hand, and certainly not inferior either in irony or vigour, to the production of his good sister.

"So many unexpected wonders, Madam and dearest sister, have of late so overshadowed my eyes and mind, and dazzled so all my senses, as in truth I neither know what I should say, nor whereat first to begin; but thinking it best to take a pattern of yourself, since I deal with you, I must, repeating the first words of your last letter, (only the sex changed,) say I rue my sight that views the evident spectacle of *a seduced Queen*. For when I enter

betwixt two extremities in judging of you, I had far *rathest* interpret it to the least dishonour on your part, which is ignorant error. Appardon me, Madam; for long approved friendship requires a round plainness. For when first I consider what strange effects have of late appeared in your country; how my avowed traitor hath not only been openly reset in your realm, but plainly made his residence in your proper houses, ever plainliest *kything*[1] himself where greatest confluence of people was; and, which is most of all, how he hath received English money in a reasonable quantity; waged both English and Scottish men therewith; proclaimed his pay at divers parish churches in England; convened his forces within England, in the sight of all that Border; and therefrom contemptuously marched, and camped within a mile of my principal city and present abode, all his trumpeters, and divers waged men, being English; and being by myself in person repulsed from that place, returned back in England with displayed banners; and since that time, with sound of trumpet, making his troops to muster within English ground: when first, I say, I consider these strange effects, and then again I call to mind, upon the one part, what number of solemn promises, not only by your Ambassadors but by many letters of your own hand, ye have both made and reiterated unto me, that he should have no harbour within your country, yea, rather stirring me farther up against him, than seeming to pity him yourself; and upon the other part,

[1] Kything himself—*showing himself.*

weighing my desires towards you,—how far being a friend to you I have ever been an enemy to all your enemies, and the only point I can be challenged in, that I take not such form of order, and at such time, with some particular men of my subjects as peradventure you would, if you were in my room; when thus I enter in consultation with myself, I cannot surely satisfy myself with wondering upon these abovementioned effects: for to affirm that these things are by your direction or privity, it is so far against all princely honour, as I protest I abhor the least thought thereof. And again; that so wise and provident a Prince, having so long and happily governed, should be so fyled and contemned by a great number of her own subjects, it is hardly to be believed: if I knew it not to be a maxim in the state of Princes, that we see and hear all with the eyes and ears of others, and if these be deceivers, we cannot shun deceits.

"Now, Madam, I have refuge to you at this time, as my only pilot to guide me safely betwixt this *Charybdis and Scylla.* Solve these doubts, and let it be seen ye will not be abused by your own subjects, who prefer the satisfying of their base-minded affections to your princely honour. That I wrote not the answer of your last letters with your late Ambassador, (Lord Zouch,) and that I returned not a letter with him, blame only, I pray you, his own behaviour; who, although it pleased you to term him wise, religious, and honest, had been fitter, in my opinion, to carry the message of a herald, than any friendly commission betwixt two neighbour Princes: for as

no reason could satisfy him, so scarcely could he have patience even to hear it offered. But if you gave him a large commission, I dare answer for it, he took it as well upon him; and, therefore, have I rather chused to send you my answer by my own messengers. Suffer me not, I pray you, to be abused with your abusers; nor grant no oversight to oversee your own honour. Remember what you promised by your letter of thanks for the delivery of O'Rorick. I trust ye will not put me in balance with such a traitorous counterpoise, nor willingly reject me; constraining me to say with Virgil—

'*Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.*'

And to give you a proof of the continuance of my honest affection, I have directed these two gentlemen unto you, whom I will heartily pray you to credit as myself in all they have in charge; and because the principal of them goes to France, to return the other back with a good answer with all convenient speed."[1]

This spirited remonstrance had the best effect upon Elizabeth, who, although she had encouraged Bothwell in his late audacious attempts, never felt much scruple in discarding an unsuccessful instrument. She was, accordingly, all smiles to the Ambassadors,

[1] Printed for the first time from the Warrender MSS. The letter is dated Edinburgh, 13th April, 1594. In an interesting volume, presented by Adam Anderson, Esq., Solicitor-general for Scotland, (an old and valued friend of the author,) to the Abbotsford Club, will be found, pp. 6, 7, James' letter of credential to his Ambassadors, Bruce and Wemyss, with a letter from the King to the Earl of Essex, bespeaking his good offices.

when, in their master's name, they invited her to stand godmother at the approaching baptism of the infant heir to the Scottish throne; and although her countenance changed when they spoke of money and the necessities of their master, yet, even on this point, Bruce, before his return, received a more favourable answer than he had expected. She assured him, that she would extend her liberality the moment the King set out on his expedition against the Catholic earls, and she saw that he was in earnest.[1] Colvil of Easter Wemyss, his brother Ambassador, now proceeded to the Court of France; whilst, about the same time, Sir William Keith was despatched to the United Provinces; and Mr Peter Young, the King's almoner, to the Court of Denmark. The object of all these missions was the same: to carry to the King's faithful and ancient allies the happy news of the birth of a Prince; to invite them to send their representatives to the baptism, which had been fixed for the 15th of July; and to hint delicately to the United States, but in perfectly intelligible terms, the necessity of presenting, at that solemn ceremony, something more substantial than congratulations.[2]

Important events now crowded rapidly on each other. On the 30th of May, the Estates assembled; and as James' avowed determination to concentrate

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr Edward Bruce to Lord Burghley, 16th May, 1594.

[2] Warrender MSS. Collect., vol. A. p. 109. MS. St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 13th April, 1594. Also, Ibid., same to same, 21st April, 1594. Also, Ibid., Orig. Draft, Sir R. Cecil to Sir R. Bowes, 17th May, 1594.

his whole strength against the Catholic earls, had conciliated the Kirk and the English faction, all proceeded amicably and firmly. Huntly, Angus, and Errol, the three mighty leaders, who were now in open rebellion, were forfeited, stript of their estates, declared traitors,[1] and a commission given to their avowed enemy, the young Earl of Argyll, to assemble the forces of the North, and pursue them with fire and sword. All persons detected in saying Mass, were ordered to be punished capitally, and their goods confiscated. It was resolved, for the preservation of the religion, and to confirm the amity between the two realms, that there should be a thorough reformation in the King's Council; and that Elizabeth's advice should be followed in such matters. The Catholic Countess of Huntly, whose intercourse with the King and Queen had been a constant thorn in the side of the Kirk, was dismissed from Court; Lord Hume recanted, and signed the Confession of Faith, either convinced in conscience, or terrified by impending severities; and the King declared, that immediately after the baptism, he would march in person, at the head of the whole strength of his dominions, against the Catholic insurgents.[2]

On the evening of the 27th August, the Earl of Sussex—a young nobleman of the highest rank, and connected, by blood, with his royal mistress—arrived at the Scottish Court. He came from Elizabeth, to

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 30th May, 1594. Ibid., same to same, 9th June, 1594.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Act of Secret Council, 23d July, 1594.

stand her gossip, or representative, at the baptism of the young Prince. He was attended by a noble retinue, and brought some rich presents from the Queen of England, with this brief letter of congratulation and counsel:—

"I make a note of my happy destiny, my good brother, in beholding my luck so fortunate as to be the baptizer of both father and son, so dear unto me; and [this] makes me frame my humble *orisons* to Him that all may,[1] that he will please bless with all happiness the prosperous continuance of both, in such a sort as my benedictions bestowed on either may be perfected through His omnipotent graces; and do promise a grant to my devotions, springing from a fountain of such good will. And pray you believe, that I never counsel or advise you aught whose first end tends not to your most good; and do conjure you, that receiving so assured knowledge of what your lewd lords [she alludes here to the Catholic earls] mean, that you neglect not God's good warning, to cause you timely shun the worst. All Kings have not had so true espiars of their harm, but have felt it or they heard it; but I am best testimony of you to too many foretellers, in whom you never yet found guile.[2]

"Thus will I end to trouble you with ragged lines; saving to request you bear with the youth of this noble Earl, in whom, though his years may not

[1] To Him that can do all things.

[2] Obscure. Probably, "But I in whom you never yet found guile, am the best amongst many forewarners.

promise him much, yet I hope his race, and his good nature, will afford your honourable regard, both for his parentage, and being of my blood, as coming from such a Prince, of whom you may make surest account, to be assured such as you could wish, as God can best witness,—to whom I pray you to grant you always victory of your evil subjects."[1]

When Sussex delivered his letter and presents, the King was in the highest bustle and good humour; engrossed not only with the many weighty concerns connected with his approaching "Rode," or military expedition, but devising sports and pastimes for the entertainment of his foreign guests the Ambassadors, and planning, with the Lord of Lindores and Mr David Fowler his masters of the revels, a variety of princely pageants, with "deep moral meanings;" one of which, the Interlude of "Neptune," was the fruitful product of his Majesty's own private brain. The expense incurred in these triumphs and shows, in which there was an unusual allowance of chariots, mimic ships, Christian knights, rural deities, Moors, windmills, and amazons, must have been excessive, judging from the account of a contemporary pamphlet, written in the highest style of quaint and courtly composition.[2] The baptism itself took place on the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 27th August, 1594. Also, Royal Letters, St. P. Off., Copy of her Majesty's Letter to the King of Scots.

[2] St. P. Off. A rare pamphlet, entitled, "A True Report of the most Triumphant and Royal Accomplishment of the Baptism of the most Excellent Right High and Mighty Prince Frederick Henry, by the Grace of God, Prince of Scotland, solemnized 30th

30th of August, in the royal chapel at Stirling castle. The infant Prince was carried by Sussex, Elizabeth's Ambassador. He was christened by Cunningham Bishop of Aberdeen, by the name of Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick; and when the solemn ceremony was concluded, and the King, the Ambassadors and nobles, with the Queen and her ladies of honour, retired from the chapel to the hall of State, "the cannons of the castle roared, so that therewith the earth trembled; and other smaller shot," says one of the city orators of the time, "made their harmony after their kind." The infant was then knighted by his royal father, "touched with the spur" by the Earl of Mar; and being crowned with a ducal coronet, richly set with diamonds, sapphires, and other precious stones, Lion King of Arms proclaimed his titles, as "The Right Excellent, High, and Magnanimous Frederick Henry, Henry Frederick, by the Grace of God, Knight and Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, Earl of Carrick, Duke of Rothesay, Prince and Great Steward of Scotland."[1] The pageants succeeded; but their details would only fatigue. It is amusing to find that the King himself did not disdain to take a part, apparelled at all points as a Christian Knight of Malta; whilst a worshipful baron, the Lord of Buccleugh, with Lord Lindores and the Abbot of Holyrood, in women's attire and gallantly mounted, enacted three amazons. The

August, 1594. Printed by Peter Short, for the Widow Butter. To be sold at her shop under St Austin's Church.

[1] Id. Ibid.

ceremony being concluded, and the voice of revelry hushed in the palace, the Earl of Sussex, after a few days, took leave, bearing with him this letter from the King to his royal mistress. It is wholly written in James' hand:—

"I could not permit, Madam and dearest sister, now after the ending of this solemn time, the nobleman bearer hereof to depart without returning with him unto you my most hearty thanks for the honouring me with so noble a substitute *gossip* in your place. And where ye excuse his youth, surely he was the fitter for a young king and feasting days. But I cannot aneuch[1] commend unto you his extreme diligence in coming, and courteous and mild behaviour here; which moves me to request you to cherish so noble a youth, now after his first employment.

"As for the other part of his commission and your letter, which concerns the Spanish lords here, ye can be no earnester now in that matter than I am, who has now renounced any farther dealing with them but by extremity; and presently have I vowed myself only to that errand, and never to take rest until I put some end thereunto. And suppose ye may justly accuse (as ever ye do) my deferring so long to put order unto them; yet, according to an old proverb, *it is better late thrive than never;* and surely I will think my fault the more excuseable if the example thereof make you to eschew the falling in the like error, in making your assistance not to come as far behind the time as my prosecution does. But in this

[1] *Aneuch*, Scottish for enough.

I remit you to your own wisdom; for you are not ignorant how occasion is painted. And now I cannot omit to lay before you some incident griefs of mine; but least I weary you too much with my ragged handwrit, I remit the particulars hereof to the report of this nobleman, only touching thus far by the way. I think ye have not given commission to any of your Council to treat with Bothwell's ambassador, nor yet allow that his agent, and one guilty of all his treasons, should use his public devotion in the French Kirk, in presence of my Ambassador; who, indeed, was better furnished with patience at the sight thereof than he is likely to get thanks for at my hands: yet now, Madam, none can brook me and Bothwell both. Examine secretly your councillors, and suffer them not to behave themselves more to your dishonour than my discontentment. Only *honestum utile est, præcipue regibus;* and if James Forret or any other *Bothwellist* be at present within your country, I crave, by these presents, delivery according to the treaties, your many hand-written promises, and my good deserts by O'Rorick. And thus not doubting, as it hath been your fortune to be godmother both to me and my son, so ye will be a *good mother* to us both; I commit you, Madam and dearest sister, to the protection of the Almighty."[1]

For these suspicions of James there was too much ground; as it is certain that Sir Robert Cecil, who, on account of the increasing infirmities of his father

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Royal Letters, James to Elizabeth, 11th September, 1594, Holyrood. Printed for the first time.

Lord Burghley, now managed the Scottish affairs, had secret intelligence with Bothwell. The Catholic earls were now alluring this audacious man, by Spanish gold, to make common cause with them against the Scottish King. Bothwell, on the other hand, with consummate baseness, had proposed to Cecil to accept the money and betray their secrets to the Queen of England, if she would still stand his friend in his present distress and misery. But he was no longer the proud and powerful partisan whom Elizabeth had once so highly favoured; and the moment she discovered that James had detected his intrigues, she threw him from her with as much indifference as she would a broken sword; commanded him to leave her dominions; and interdicted her subjects, under the severest penalties, from giving him harbour or assistance. He was no longer permitted, in the strong language which the King himself used in his remonstrance to Sussex, to "tak muster, display cornet or ensign, blaw trumpet, strike drum," or even in any way live and breathe within England.[1]

Having secured this expulsion of his mortal enemy, James assembled a Convention at Stirling,[2] and made the most active preparations for the attack of the Catholic earls. On both sides a violent and deter-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr John Colvil to Sir R. Cecil, whom he addresses as "his honorable Lord and Mæcenas," 31st July, 1594. Also, Ibid., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 3d August, 1594. Also, Ibid., Royal Letters, "The Effect of the King of Scots Speech to the Earl of Sussex," 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Earl of Sussex to Sir R. Cecil, 8th Sept., 1594.

mined struggle was anticipated; as there were many deep feelings and bitter passions which festered in the minds of the leaders and their hosts. With the Kirk, it was a war of religious persecution, or rather extermination. Their avowed object was to depose *Antichrist*, and to compel all Catholics to recant or at once give up their lands, their honours, and their country, for their privilege to adhere to that Church which they believed to be of divine origin and the only depository of the truth. But to these feelings were added, as may be easily imagined, many motives and passions of baser alloy: ambition; love of plunder; deep feudal hatred; long-delayed and fondly-cherished hopes of revenge; and all that catalogue of dark and merciless passions which spring from the right of private war and the prevalence of family feuds. These all raged in the bosoms of the opposed leaders and combatants; and the exacerbation they produced, was shown alike by the energy of their preparations and the cruelty with which they fought. Huntly, Angus, Errol, and Auchendown, since their refusal of the Act of Abolition, had been gathering their strength, and were now busily engaged in levying recruits, partly at their own charges, partly with Spanish gold, of which they had received repeated supplies. It had been now for many years the practice of Elizabeth, with the permission of James, to employ large bodies of Scottish auxiliaries in her wars in the Low Countries. Scottish troops also, often served in Ireland; and the Highland chiefs had long driven a lucrative and warlike com-

merce with that country, selling their services, to the highest bidder, and carrying over large bodies of pikemen, bowmen, and even of hagbutteers, to the assistance of Elizabeth or her enemies, as it best suited their interest. From these causes, there were now in Scotland many experienced officers and numerous bands of mercenaries, ready, like the Italian *Condottieri*, or the Swiss bands, to offer their service wherever they heard the tuck of drum or the clink of gold; and as Huntly had high reputation as a military leader, lived in almost regal splendour in his palace at Strathbogie, and was young, generous, and brave, the Catholic camp was in no want of recruits, and soon assumed a formidable appearance. He was now also joined by Bothwell, who, driven to desperation by the mortal hatred of the Scottish King; his recent proscription by the Queen of England; his desertion by the Kirk, who had detected his dealings with the Catholics; and the hunting down, torturing, and execution of his poor vassals, had been unable to resist the bribes held out to him. The papers still exist which enable us to trace the last struggles and plots of this desperate man; but we can only give them a passing glance. It was arranged between him and his new associates, that when Huntly was engaged in the North, Bothwell should make a diversion in the South; thus distracting the King and dividing his forces. But this was not all. He entered into an agreement with his new friends, in which it was proposed, by a sudden *coup de main*, to attack the Court, imprison the King,

seize the infant Prince, murder Sir George Hume the King's favourite; and, as he himself expressed it in his letter to the ministers of the Kirk, "*put in practice the loveable custom of their progenitors at Lauder*," by completely revolutionizing the Government.[1] It was asserted, and on good grounds, that the usual "Band," or feudal agreement in such conspiracies, was drawn up and signed by the *enterprisers*; but the time for its execution was not fixed; and the seizure of some of the inferior agents, with the course of events in the North, happily rendered the whole plot abortive.

These events were of a stirring and romantic kind; for, on the 21st September, Argyll having received the royal commission to pursue Huntly and his associates, set out on his expedition at the head of a force of six thousand men. Of this army, three thousand only were chosen men, bearing harquebuses, bows, and pikes; the rest being more slenderly equipt, both as to body-armour and weapons. Of cavalry, he had few or none; but he expected to be joined by Lord Forbes, with the Laird of Towey, the Dunbars, and other barons, who, it was hoped, would form a strong reinforcement, and be mostly mounted.[2] It had been the King's intention to postpone the attack upon the insurgent barons till he had assembled the whole force of his realm, and was ready to take the command in person. But the ministers of the Kirk

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bothwell to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, 7th September, 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 27th Sept., 1594.

urged the danger of delay: some of them even buckled on their broadswords and rode to the camp; whilst Argyll himself, young, (he was only nineteen,) ardent, and acting under the stimulus of personal revenge, determined on instant action. He had already, he said, been twice on the eve of marching, and twice been countermanded; but now the slaughter of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Murray, should be avenged on Huntly; to whom he sent a message that, within three days, he meant to sleep at Strathbogie. To this taunting challenge Huntly replied, that Argyll should be welcome: he would himself be his porter, and open all the gates of his palace to his young friend; but he must not take it amiss if he rubbed his cloak against Argyll's plaid ere they parted.[1]

On advancing to Aberdeen, Argyll ordered Red Lion, the herald, to proclaim the royal commission by sound of trumpet in the market-place, and appointed Sir Lauchlan Maclean of Duart to the chief command under himself. He was joined by the Macintoshes, the Grants, the Clan Gregor, the Macgillivrays, with all their friends and dependants, and by the whole surname of the Campbells; with many others, whom either greediness of prey or malice against the Gordons had thrust into that expedition. These, including the rabble of camp-followers, or, as Bowes terms them, "*rascals and poke-bearers*," formed a body of ten thousand strong. But of this number only six thousand were fighting

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 28th Sept., 1594. Historie of James the Sext, p. 339.

men; and out of these there were not above fifteen hundred disciplined hagbutteers, chiefly serving under Maclean; the rest being promiscuously armed with dirks, swords, dags, Lochaber axes, two-handed swords, and bows and arrows. He had neither cavalry nor artillery; and a large part of his force was totally regardless of discipline, disdaining command, composed of chieftains and people distracted by old feuds and suspicions, marching, as described by an eye-witness, "at raggle and in plumps, without order."

With this army Argyll proceeded into Badenoch, and besieged the castle of Ruthven, belonging to Huntly; but the place was bravely defended by the Macphersons. He had no means of battering the walls; and abandoning the siege, he led his troops through the hills to Strathbogie. It was his purpose to ravage this country, which belonged to Huntly, with fire and sword; and thence come down into the Lowlands to form a junction with Lord Forbes, who, with his own kin and the Frasers, Dunbars, Ogilvies, Leslies, and others, were at that moment on their way to meet him. With this object, he arrived on the 2d of October at Drimmin in Strathdown, where he encamped;[1] and soon after received news that Huntly and Errol were in the neighbourhood, and purposed to attack him, in spite of their great inferiority in force. The disparity was indeed great; for the Catholic earls could not muster above fifteen hundred, or, at most, two thousand men. But of these the greater part were resolute and gallant

[1] Warrender MSS., B., p. 8.

gentlemen, all well mounted and fully armed; and amongst them some officers of veteran experience, who had served in the Low Countries. They had, besides, six pieces of ordnance, which were placed under the charge of Captain Andrew Gray, who afterwards commanded the English and Scottish auxiliaries in Bohemia.[1]

On the morning of the 3d of October, Huntly, who had marched from Strathbogie to Auchendown, the castle of Sir Patrick Gordon, having received word by his scouts that Argyll was at no great distance, sent Captain Thomas Ker, a veteran officer, at the head of a small body of cavalry, to view the enemy and report their strength. In executing this, he fell in with Argyll's "spials," and slew them all except one, who brought him to the vicinity of their encampment, which was near Glenlivat, in the mountainous district of Strathavon. On his return, Captain Ker concealed the number of their opponents, affirming that a few resolute men might easily have the advantage; and Huntly, following his advice, instantly marched forward. Errol led the advance, supported by Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, the Lairds of Gight, Bonniton Wood, and Captain Ker and three hundred gentlemen. Huntly commanded the rearward, having on his right the Laird of Clunie-Gordon, on his left Gordon of Abergeldie, and the six pieces of artillery so placed as to be completely masked, or covered by the cavalry, so that they were dragged forward unper-

[1] Warrender MSS., Vol. B., p. 9, d.; in which there is a minute contemporary account of the battle of Glenlivat.

ceived within range of the enemy's position. They then opened their fire; and on the first discharge, which was directed at the yellow standard of Argyll, struck down and slew Macneill, the Laird of Barra's third son, one of their bravest officers, and Campbell of Lochnell, who held the standard. This successful commencement occasioned extraordinary confusion amongst the Highlanders, to many of whom the terrible effects of artillery were even at this late day unknown; and a large body of them, yelling and brandishing their broadswords and axes, made some ineffectual attempts to reach the horsemen; but receiving another fire from the little ordnance-train of Captain Gray, they took to flight, and in an incredibly short time were out of sight and pursuit. Still, however, a large body remained; and Argyll had the advantage not only of the sun, then shining fiercely in the eyes of his opponents, glancing on their steel coats and making the plain appear on fire, but of the ground: for his army were arrayed on the top of a steep hill covered with high heather and stones, whilst the ground at the bottom was soft and mossy, full of holes,—called in that country peat-pots, and dangerous for cavalry. But all this did not deter Huntly's vanguard, under Errol and Auchendown, from advancing resolutely to the attack. Errol, however, dreading the marsh, made an oblique movement by some firmer ground which lay on one side, and hoped thus to turn the flank of the enemy; but Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, urged on by his fiery temper, spurred his horse directly towards the

hill, and getting entangled with his men in the mossy ground, was exposed to a murderous fire from the force under Maclean of Duart. This chieftain was conspicuous from his great stature and strength; he was covered with a shirt of mail, wielded a double-edged Danish battle-axe, and appears to have been a more experienced officer than the rest, as he placed his men, who were mostly hagbutteers, in a small copsewood hard by, from which they could deliver their fire, and be screened from the attack of cavalry. Auchendown, nevertheless, although his ranks were dreadfully thinned by this fire of the enemy's infantry, managed to disengage them, and spurring up the hill, received a bullet in the body, and fell from his horse; whilst his companions shouted with grief and rage, and made desperate efforts to rescue him. The Highlanders, however, who knew him well, rushed in upon him, despatched him with their dirks, and cutting off his head displayed it in savage triumph,—a sight which so enraged the Gordons, that they fought with a fury which alike disregarded discipline and life. This gave an advantage to Maclean, who, enclosing the enemy's vanguard, and pressing it into narrow space between his own force and Argyll's, would have cut them to pieces had not Huntly come speedily to their support and renewed the battle; attacking both Argyll and Maclean with desperate energy, and calling loudly to his friends to revenge Auchendown. It was at this moment that some of the Gordons caught a sight of Fraser, the King's herald, who rode

beside Argyll, and was dressed in his tabard, with the Red Lion embroidered on it, within the double tressure. This ought to have been his protection; but it seemed rather to point him out as a victim: and the horsemen shouting out, "Have at the Lion," ran him through with their spears, and slew him on the spot. The battle was now at its height, and raged for two hours with the utmost cruelty. Errol was severely wounded with a bullet in the arm, and by one of the sharp-barbed arrows of the Highland bowmen which pierced deep into the thigh. He lost his pennon, or guidon, also; which was won by Maclean. Gordon of Gight was struck with three bullets through the body, and had two plaits of his steel coat carried into him; wounds which next day proved mortal. Huntly himself was in imminent danger of his life; for his horse was shot under him, and the Highlanders were about to attack him on the ground with their knives and axes, when he was extricated and horsed again by Innermarkie; after which he again charged the enemy under Argyll, whose troops wavered, and at last began to fly in such numbers that only twenty men were left round him. Upon this the young chief, overcome with grief and vexation at so disgraceful a desertion, shed tears of rage, and would have still renewed the fight, had not Murray of Tullibardin seized his bridle and forced him off the field. Seeing the day lost, Maclean, who had done most, and suffered least in this cruel fight, withdrew his men from the wood, and retired in good order; but seven hundred Highlanders were slain in the

chase, which was continued till the steepness of the mountains rendered further pursuit impossible. Such was the celebrated battle of Glenlivat. The loss on Huntly's side was mostly of gentlemen, of whom Sir Patrick Gordon of Auchendown, his uncle, "a wise, valiant, and resolute knight," was chiefly lamented. Besides him, twenty other gentlemen were slain, and some forty or fifty wounded; but the victory was complete, and recalled to memory the bloody fight of Harlaw, in 1411, between the Earl of Mar and Donald Balloch; in which, under somewhat similar circumstances, the superior armour and discipline of the Lowland knights proved too strong for the ferocious but irregular efforts of a much larger force of Highlanders.[1]

During these transactions, the King, unconscious of this reverse, had left his palace at Stirling, and advanced with his army to Dundee, where Argyll, in person, brought him the news of his own defeat. James, however, was more enraged than dismayed by this intelligence. He had left his capital so well defended[2] that he dreaded nothing from Bothwell. He knew that, from the exhausted state of the country, it would be impossible for Huntly to keep his forces together; and he swore that the death of a royal herald, who had been murdered with the King's coat on, should be avenged on these audacious rebels. Nor did he fail

[1] The above account of the battle of Glenlivat is taken chiefly from the original letters of Bowes, who was on the spot.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 3d October. Ibid., 8th October. Ibid., 12th October, 1594.

to keep his promise. In spite of the severity of the season, he advanced with his army to Aberdeen, attended by Andrew Melvil and a body of the ministers of the Kirk, who, with the feeling that this was a crusade against the infidels, had joined the camp, and loudly applauded the meditated vengeance of the monarch.[1] He thence pushed on to Strathbogie. This noble residence of Huntly,[2] which had been fourteen years in building, was blown up with gunpowder, and levelled in two days; nothing being left but the great old tower, whose massive masonry defied the efforts of the pioneers; whilst its master, deserted by his barons and dependants, fled into the mountainous parts of Caithness.[3] James had been much incensed against him by the scornful contents of an intercepted letter written to Angus, in which Huntly spoke of the King's rumoured campaign as likely to turn out a "*gowk's storm.*"[4] Slanes in Buchan, the principal castle of Errol, who still lay languishing from his wounds; Culsamond in Garioch, the house of the laird of Newton-Gordon; Bagays and Craig in Angus, the castles of Sir Walter Lind-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 23d Oct., 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Carey to Sir R. Cecil, 18th November, 1594. "The castle and palace of Strathbogy clean cast down and brent." Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Occurrents, 29th October, 1594.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 29th Oct., 1594. Ibid., same to same, 29th Oct., 1594. MS. St. P. Off., Occurrents, 28th and 29th October.

[4] "Gowk" is the Scottish word for the "Cuckoo." An April storm.

say and Sir John Ogilvy, successively shared the fate of Strathbogie. Indeed, there is little doubt that the royal severity, whetted by the exhortations of Andrew Melvil, who bore a pike and joined the soldiers in the destruction of Strathbogie, would have fallen still heavier on this devoted district, had not famine, and the remonstrances of Thirlstane and Glammis, compelled the King to fall back upon Aberdeen.[1] Here, after the execution of some of Huntly's men, he published a general pardon to all the Commons who had been in the field at the battle of Glenlivat, upon their payment of the fines imposed by the Council.[2] He then appointed the Duke of Lennox to be his lieutenant or representative in the North, assisted by a council of barons and ministers. Amongst the civilians were the Earl Marshal, Lord Forbes, Sir Robert Melvil, and Sir John Carmichael, with the Lairds of Dunipace, Findlater, and Balquhan; whilst of the ministry, were Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Nicolson, Mr Peter Blackburn, Mr Alexander Douglas, and Mr Duncan Davison. A charge was next given to the barons and gentlemen who resided north of the river Dee, to apprehend all the rebels within their boundaries; and although in the greatest possible distress for money to pay his troops, the King, who trusted to the solemn promises of Elizabeth, made an effort to keep them together; and left behind him a body of two hundred horse, and one hundred

[1] MS. St. P. Off., 3d November, 1594, Occurrents certified from Aberdeen.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Occurrents, 3d November, 1594.

foot, under the command of Sir John Carmichael. These were ordered to assist the Duke of Lennox, whose residence was to be in Aberdeen, Elgin, or Inverness, until Argyll, who had been appointed by James to the permanent government of the North, should assemble his friends and relieve him of his charge. Meanwhile, the Duke was empowered to hold Justice Ayres, or courts for the punishment of offenders; and the barons and gentlemen of the North bound themselves, before the King's departure, in strict promises of support.[1] Having completed these judicious arrangements, the monarch disbanded his forces, and returned to Stirling on the 14th November.[2]

[1] MS. Books of the Privy Council of Scotland, 7th Nov., 1594. MS. St. P. Off., Occurrents sent from Aberdeen, 8th Nov., 1594.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Abstract of letters from Edinburgh, 16th November, 1594.

CHAP. IV.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1594—1597.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Pope.*
Elizabeth.	Henry IV.	Rudolph II.	Philip II.	Philip II.	Clement VIII.

JAMES had now fulfilled all his promises to Elizabeth; and by the severity with which he had put down the rebellion of the Catholic earls, had more than fulfilled the expectations of the Kirk. The castles and houses which were said to have been polluted by the Mass, were smoking and in ruins;[1] the noblemen and gentry, whose only petition had been, that they should be permitted to retain their estates, and have their rents transmitted to them in the banishment which they had chosen rather than renounce the faith of their fathers, were fugitives and wanderers, hiding in the caves and forests, and dreading every hour to be betrayed into the hands of their enemies.[2] All this had been accomplished at no little personal risk: for the King was surrounded by perpetual plots

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 28th September, 1594.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Bowes, 29th October, 1594.

against his liberty, and sometimes even against his life.[1] He had cheerfully undergone great privations: had impoverished his revenue, incurred heavy debts, and imposed burdens upon his subjects, that he might, by one great effort, extinguish the Catholic faith, destroy the hopes and intrigues of Spain, and relieve the Queen of England from all her fears. He had done this, trusting to her promises of that pecuniary aid which was absolutely necessary for the payment of his troops; and before he set out, had despatched his secretary, Sir Robert Cockburn, to the English Court,[2] with the perfect confidence that everything which had been undertaken by "his good sister" would be fulfilled.

In this, however, he was miserably disappointed. Whilst the King was engaged in burning and razing the houses of the Catholics, Elizabeth and the now venerable Burghley were closeted at Greenwich, laying their heads together to find out some plausible excuse for stopping the payment of the promised supplies. Cockburn, the Ambassador, was artfully detained and delayed from week to week, and month to month, till the result of the campaign could be guessed with some certainty. When this was ascertained, the sum of two thousand pounds, for which an order had been given, was recalled;[3] and a paper was drawn up by

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 7th Oct., 1594. Also, Ibid., Occurrents, 8th Nov., 1594, and 16th Nov., 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Cockburn to Sir R. Cecil, 16th September, 1594.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Bowes to Burghley, 23d Oct., 1594.

Lord Burghley, detailing the sums paid by England to James since the year 1586, and proving, to the perfect satisfaction of Elizabeth if not of James, that instead of any money being then due to the King of Scotland, he had been overpaid to the extent of six thousand five hundred pounds.[1] This, the Queen added, was at the rate of three thousand pounds a-year; which James could hardly complain of, as it was the exact allowance given both to her sister Mary and herself by their father Henry the Eighth: and yet the Scottish King now pretended that she had promised an annuity of four thousand pounds; which she positively denied.

For this unwise and double conduct in the Queen there could be no defence. She had first excited James to this northern expedition by flattery and large promises of support; she now forgot all, and deserted him without scruple or remorse. Such a mode of proceeding roused his passion to a pitch of unusual fury; and when Sir R. Cockburn returned, the storm broke pitilessly on his head. The King, at the same time, expressed, in no moderate terms, his rage and suspicion against Burghley and Sir Robert Cecil, by whose advice Elizabeth had acted; and some busy courtiers blew the coals, by assuring him that both father and son were involved in the intrigues and treasons of Bothwell. Had the Queen kept her promises, (so he said;) had she not thrown to the winds her solemn assurances made him by her Ambassadors Lord Burgh and Lord Zouch, the land would have

[1] MS. St. P. Off. B.C., Scottish payments, 5th Nov., 1594. The indorsation is in Burghley's hand.

been utterly purged of the enemies to God, religion, and both the countries. But now matters might proceed as they pleased. If the enemy revived; if they began again to look confidently for Spanish money, and Spanish messengers; if recruits were raised in the Isles to assist the Catholics and O'Neill in Ireland; if the rebel earls and Bothwell had met together as they were reported to have done; if, in his own Council, plots were being carried on in favour of the Catholics, and his own life was not safe from the efforts of desperate men, who had conspired to set up the young Prince, and pull him from his royal seat: all these manifold dangers and miseries were to be ascribed most justly to his desertion by Elizabeth. He had performed his part, and more than redeemed all the pledges which he had given. She had not only failed in all her promises, but now had the hardihood to disavow them; and she might take the consequences. If he was himself compelled to look to other friendships, and accept of other offers of assistance contrary to his own wishes; if the members of his Council, who were inclined to the Catholic side, had now more to say than before; if at the moment when Spanish intrigues were about to be extinguished for ever, he was arrested in his course; all was her fault, not his.[1] He must now strengthen himself as he best could, and place no more implicit reliance upon English promises.

It was impossible to deny the justice of these com-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Cockburn to Sir R. Bowes, 12th Dec., 1594.

plaints; and although for the moment all was quiet in the North under the government of the Duke of Lennox, there were many subjects for anxiety. The King's debts were enormous, and more money still was imperiously required to pay his troops and retain the advantages he had acquired. His late severities to the Catholic earls, and his alliance with the Kirk, the ministers of which now lauded as highly as they had vituperated him, had lost him the friendship of all his foreign allies, and of the influential body of the English Catholics; and within his own Court and Council there were so many rivalries and jealousies, so much plotting and intriguing, that, on his return, he found the campaign in the North almost less irksome than the civil battles he had to fight in his own palace. The great struggle was between the Lord Chancellor Thirlstane and the Earl of Mar. Thirlstane's faction was strong; embracing Hamilton, Athol, Hume, Buccleugh, Ogilvy, and many others. Mar, on the other hand, had the keeping of the Prince, commanded the castles of Stirling and Edinburgh, and enjoyed the complete confidence of the King, who had become somewhat suspicious and impatient under the grasping and increasing power of the Chancellor.

But James had another and nearer source of anxiety in the Queen, who was equally the enemy of Mar and Thirlstane. This Princess, for a considerable period after her marriage, appears to have shunned all interference with party or public affairs; but she was jealous of Thirlstane, who had opposed her marriage,

and was said to have secretly attacked her honour; and of Mar, because her son, the young heir to the throne, had been committed in charge to him rather than to her. Besides, she and the King, though outwardly living on fair and decent terms, were neither loving nor confidential. James' cold temperament and coarse jokes disgusted the Queen, who was not insensible to admiration; and she consoled herself, for the desertion of her lord, in the more attractive society of the young Duke of Lennox, the noblest of the Scottish courtiers. This, on the other hand, roused the royal jealousy; and about the time of the christening, Mr John Colvil assured Sir Robert Cecil, whom he calls his most honourable lord and Mæcenas, that matters were on a very miserable footing. He writes as follows:—

"These few lines I thought meet only to put in your hands, to go no further but to her Majesty, and your most honourable father my special good lord. It is certain that the King has conceived a great jealousy of the Queen, which burns the more the more he covers it. The Duke is the principal suspected. The Chancellor casts in materials to this fire. The Queen is forewarned; but with the like cunning will not excuse, till she be accused. '*Haec sunt incendia malorum;*' and the end can be no less tragical nor was betwixt his parents. The President of the Session, called the Prior of Pluscardine, is by her indirectly stirred up to counterpoise the Chancellor, who she blames of all these slanders; and the Chancellor is indirectly supported by the other: both the princes

holding the Wolf by the ears."[1] We know also, from a letter of Mr James Murray, a gentleman of the bed-chamber, that, about this time, a plot had been laid for the "disgrace of the Queen and the Duke of Lennox; and to so bitter and mortal an excess had the King's fears and jealousy proceeded shortly before the baptism, that he had doubts as to the paternity of prince Henry."[2] On the 30th of July, a month before the baptism, Colvil wrote thus to Sir R. Cecil: The "King repents him sore that he has made such convention to this baptism; for upon the jealousy mentioned in my last he begins to doubt of the child. I think he had not been baptized at this time if so many Princes had not been invited. That matter takes deep root upon both sides.

> Nocte dieque suos gestant in pectore fastus,
> Incautos perdet tacita flamma duos."

It is possible that all this may have been much exaggerated by Colvil, and that Bothwell's gossip to the Dean of Durham, Toby Mathews, of the King's love for the beautiful daughter of the Earl of Morton, may have been equally highly coloured; but there can be little doubt that James and his royal consort were not on comfortable terms; and it seems certain that the Queen about this time, not only placed herself at the head of a faction which num-

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Mr. John Colvil to Sir R. Cecil, 26th July, 1594. Also, MS. St. P. Off., Mr James Murray to "Faithful Gawane," 16th Aug., 1594.]

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., James Murray to his Faithful Gawane, 16th August, 1594; and Ibid., Mr John Colvil to Sir R. Cecil.

bered in its ranks some of the most powerful nobles, but began to have considerable weight both in the Court and with the country.

In the North, also, everything was in commotion; for although Lennox had, for a brief season, succeeded in restoring tranquillity, by the vigour with which he had executed the charge committed to him, all became again disordered on his retirement from office. The great cause of these excesses was to be traced to some extraordinary discoveries made at this time by the young Earl of Argyll, which showed that treachery, not cowardice, had been the cause of his defeat at Glenlivat. It was found out, by the confessions of some accomplices, that Campbell of Lochnell, the near relative of the young chief, and, failing an only brother, the heir to his estates and honours, had been tampering with Huntly; and that the flight of so large a body of Highlanders was only part of a conspiracy against the life of Argyll. It was discovered, also, by evidence which could not be contradicted, that this foul plot against the young earl was intimately connected with the late murder of the Earl of Murray and the assassination of the Laird of Calder; that all were branches of one great conspiracy, of which a chief contriver was Maitland the Chancellor, assisted by Huntly, Duncan Campbell of Glenurchy, Archibald Campbell of Lochnell, Sir James Campbell of Ardkinglas, Macaulay of Ardincaple, and John Lord Maxwell. These titled and official ruffians, in the spirit of the times, which could combine the strictest legal precision with

the utmost familiarity with blood, had drawn up a *band*, by which, in the most solemn manner, they became mutually bound to each other to achieve the murder of James Earl of Murray, Archibald Earl of Argyll, Colin Campbell of Lundy his only brother, and John Campbell of Calder. The result was to be the possession of the earldom of Argyll by Lochnell, and the appropriation of a large part of its princely estates by the Chancellor Maitland and the other conspirators. With the success of one part of this conspiracy, the cruel murder of the Earl of Murray, we are already acquainted; and, in the case of the Laird of Calder, they were also successful: for this unfortunate gentleman was about this time shot at night, through the window of his own house, in Lorn, by an assassin named M'Kellar, who had been furnished with a hagbut by Ardkinglas, which, to make surer work, he had loaded with three bullets. So far this diabolical plot was followed out with success. But at this crisis, the remorse or interest of Ardkinglas revealed the conspiracy to Argyll; and the apprehension, torture, and confession of John Oig Campbell and M'Kellar, who were executed, led, at last, to the revelation of the "Great Contract," as it was called. The "Band" itself fell into the hands of Argyll, and convinced him that the assassination of his unhappy friends, Murray and Calder, was to have been followed, on the first good opportunity that should present itself, by the murder of himself. Of all this the consequences were dreadful. Argyll hurried to the North, assembled his vassals, and proclaimed

a war of extermination against Huntly, and all who had opposed or deserted him at Glenlivat.[1] Huntly, on the other hand, having, by this time, somewhat recovered his recent losses, was once more in the field, and threatened to hang up any retainer of his, high or low, who dared to pay the fines levied on him, or sought for peace in obedience to the laws.[2] Mar, a nobleman very powerful in the North as well as the South, joined with Argyll; whilst Huntly had many friends at Court, who secretly screened him in his excesses. The ministers of the Kirk, in the meantime, sounded their terrible trumpet of warning to all true men, denouncing from the pulpit the reviving influence of the Catholics; and large bodies of soldiers, disbanded for want of pay, roamed over the country, and committed every sort of robbery and excess. Ministers of religion were murdered; fathers slain by their own sons; brothers by their brethren; married women ravished under their own roof; houses, with their miserable inmates, burned amidst savage mirth; and the land so utterly wasted by fire, plunder, and the total cessation of agricultural labour, that famine at last stalked in to complete the horrid picture, and destroy, by the most terrible of deaths, those who had escaped the sword.[3]

Amidst these dreadful excesses, the only support of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Bowes' Advertisements, sent him from Edinburgh, 5th Jan., 1594-5. Gregory's Hist. of the Highlands, pp. 244, 250, 251, 253.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Advertisements by Letters from Edinburgh, 15th January, 1594-5.

[3] MS. Calderwood, Brit. Mus., Ayscough, 4738, p. 1183.

the country was in the energy of the King: for his Council was torn by faction, and some of the chief dignitaries were the offenders. But although deserted by Elizabeth, and compelled to disband his troops and relax his military efforts against the Catholics, James assembled a Convention of his nobles; and evinced not only a sympathy for the sufferings of the people, but his resolution to make the utmost efforts to remove them.[1] Finding it impossible to reduce the northern districts to order without vigorous proceedings against the chiefs, he committed Athol, Lovat, and M'Kenzie to ward at Linlithgow; imprisoned Argyll, Glenurchy, and others, in Edinburgh castle; and confined Tullybardin, Garntully, and their fierce adherents, in Dumbarton and Blackness: to remain in this durance till they had made redress for the horrid excesses committed by their clansmen and supporters, and had come under an obligation to restore order to the country.[2] As to the Catholic earls, and Bothwell their associate, both parties, now nearly desperate of any ultimate success, and driven by the active pursuit of the King from one concealment to another, were anxious to reach the sea-coast and escape to the Continent. Bothwell especially, that once proud and potent baron, who had been the correspondent of Elizabeth, the friend of Burghley, the pillar of the Kirk, the arbiter of the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., George Nicolson to Burghley, 29th January, 1594-5.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., George Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, 30th January, 1594-5.

Court, and the idol of the people, was reduced to the lowest extremity. He had been expelled from all his castles and houses; and now the Hermitage, his last and strongest den, was in the hands of Hume, his mortal enemy.[1] Scott the Laird of Balwearie, one of his chief friends, who was acquainted with the secrets of his recent conspiracy with the Catholic earls, was seized, and purchased his life by a full revelation of the plot. His brother, Hercules Stewart, suffered on the scaffold; and the Kirk branded him with excommunication. William Hume, the brother of Davy the Devil, or David Hume of Manderston, whom Bothwell had slain, was employed to trace the fugitive from cover to cover; and executing this service with a scent sharpened by revenge, he ran him through Caithness to the sea-coast; from which, after various windings and doublings, he escaped to France.[2]

Meanwhile, Huntly and Errol lingered in Scotland, with a last hope that assistance in money and in troops was on the eve of arriving from Spain; but this prospect was utterly blasted by a disaster which befell their messenger Mr John Morton, a Jesuit, brother to the Laird of Cambo, who had been intrusted with a secret mission by the King of Spain and the Pope. This person had taken his passage in a Dutch ship, and was landed at Leith; but the disguise

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 24th Oct., 1594.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, 19th Feb., 1594-5. Same to same, 3d March, 1594-5. Also, Ibid., same to same, 22d February, 1594-5. Also, Ibid., Mr Colvil to Sir R. Cecil, 19th March, 1594-5. Also, Ibid., Mr John Colvil, 22d February, 1594-5. Historie of James the Sext, p. 344.

under which he travelled had not concealed him from a fellow passenger, a son of Erskine of Dun, who hinted his suspicion to Mr David Lindsay; and this active minister of the Kirk instantly pounced upon Father Morton, as he was called, who, in the struggle with the officers of justice, tore his secret instructions with his teeth.[1] The fragments, however, were picked up, joined together, their contents deciphered, and the King, who piqued himself upon his shrewdness in cross-examination, exerted his powers with much success. He brought Morton to confess that he was a Jesuit, though he appeared only a Scottish gentleman seeking his native air for the recovery of his health; that he was Confessor to the Seminary College in Rome, and sent into Scotland by the Pope, and with special messages from Cardinal Cajetano and Fathers Crichton and Tyrie to Mr James Gordon, Huntly's near relative. The messenger added, that he was directed to reprove the Catholic lords for their disposal of the treasure lately sent, which had been given not to Catholics, but to courtiers who were heretics; as well as for their rashness in "delating" the King to be a Catholic, before the Spanish army destined for Scotland was in readiness. Their union with Bothwell, by which they had greatly exasperated the King, was also condemned by the Pope; and no hope of further treasure held out till they had vindicated themselves before the councillors of the King of Spain in the Low Countries. On Morton's

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr John Colvil to S., 25th March, 1595.

person was found a small jewel or tablet, containing an exquisite representation of the Passion of our Lord, carved minutely in ivory; a present, as he said, from Cardinal Cajetano to the Scottish Queen. This James, taking up, asked him to what use he put it. "To remind me," said Morton, "when I gaze on it and kiss it, of my Lord's Passion. Look, my liege," he continued, "how livelily the Saviour is here seen hanging between the two thieves, whilst below, the Roman soldier is piercing His sacred side with the lance. Ah, that I could prevail on my sovereign but once to kiss it before he lays it down!"—"No," said James; "the Word of God is enough to remind me of the crucifixion; and besides, this carving of yours is so exceeding small, that I could not kiss Christ without kissing both the thieves and the executioners."[1]

The ministers of the Kirk insisted that this unhappy person should be subjected to the torture of the boots, as the only means of obtaining a full confession; but he was saved from this dreadful suffering by his simplicity, and the candour with which he disclosed to the King all the objects of his mission.[2]

This last blow fell heavily on the party. It convinced Huntly and Errol, that for the present their cause

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr John Colvil to S., 25th March, 1595. Also, Ibid., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, 25th March, 1595. Also, Ibid., 5th April, 1595. Abstract of letters sent to Sir R. Bowes.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 5th April, 1595. Letters from Scotland to Bowes. Also, Ibid., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, 3d April, 1595. Also, Ibid., Mr John Colvil, 1st April, 1595. Also, Ibid., 2d April, 1595, "Deposition of Mr John Morton, Jesuit."

was desperate, and that to retire into a temporary banishment was the only resource which remained. It was in vain that Father Gordon, Huntly's uncle, and a devoted Catholic, implored them to remain: in vain that on a solemn occasion, when Mass was said for the last time in the cathedral Church at Elgin, this zealous priest, descending from the high altar and mounting the pulpit, exhorted them not to depart, but remain in their native country and hazard all for the Faith. His discourse fell on deaf ears; and finding entreaty fruitless, he resolved to accompany them. On the 17th of March, Errol embarked at Peterhead; and on the 19th, two days after, Huntly, with his uncle and a suite of sixteen persons, took ship at Aberdeen for Denmark; intending, as he said, to pass through Poland into Italy.[1]

Scarcely had they departed, when intelligence of Bothwell reached Court. To so miserable a state was he reduced, that he had been seen skulking near Perth with only two followers, meanly clad, and in utter destitution. He then disappeared, and none could tell his fate; but he reëmerged in Orkney, probably, like his infamous namesake, intending to turn pirate. He had one ship and a fly-boat; and his desperate fortunes were still followed, from attachment or adventure, by some of his old "*Camarados*," Colonel Boyd, Captain Foster, and a few other gentlemen. Apparently he was not successful: for we

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Extracts from letters from Scotland, by Sir R. Bowes, 5th April, 1595.

soon hear of him at Paris,[1] in correspondence with his profligate associate Archibald Douglas.

All apprehensions from Bothwell and the Catholic earls being at an end, and the King having most energetically fulfilled his promises to the Kirk; Protestantism being safe, and the hopes of Spain destroyed; he had leisure to address himself to a more difficult task than his last: to restore something like order, justice, and tranquillity to the country. Here all was out of joint. The Court was divided into factions. The Queen, of whose religious orthodoxy great doubts began now to be entertained, hated Mar, who was still intrusted with the person and government of the young Prince; a charge which, she insisted, belonged naturally to her.[2] The King supported Mar against his great rival the Chancellor Maitland, a man full of talent, of inordinate ambition, and, as we have already seen, unscrupulous, intriguing, and familiar with conspiracy and blood. Maitland strengthened himself against his enemies by courting the favour of the Queen, who had at first treated all his advances with haughty suspicion; but latterly, dreading his strength or conciliated by his proffered devotion, supported his faction, which included Buccleugh, Cessford, the Master of Glammis, and other powerful barons. The potent house of Hamilton affected neutrality; whilst the ministers of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bothwell to Douglas, 17th June, 1595.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., George Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, 22d June, 1595.

the Kirk also kept themselves aloof, and exerted their whole energies to procure the absolute ruin of Huntly and his exiled associates, by inducing the King to forfeit their estates in earnest, and reduce them to beggary. This James wisely refused. Enough, he thought, had already been done for the safety of the Protestant faith; and to cut up by the roots the ancient houses of Angus, Huntly, and Errol; to punish, by utter ruin and extermination, those who were already exiles for conscience' sake, would have been cruel and impolitic. To Bothwell, indeed, who had repeatedly conspired against his life, he showed no mercy; and his great estates were divided between Hume, Cessford, and Buccleugh.[1] But the Countesses of Huntly and Errol were permitted to remain in Scotland, and matters so managed that their unfortunate lords should not be utterly destitute. The principle of James was to balance the different factions against each other, keeping all dependent on himself, and throwing his weight occasionally into the one or the other scale as he judged best. The probable restoration, therefore, of such great men as Huntly, was a useful threat to hold over the heads of their rivals. But with all his policy, the monarch found his position dangerous and difficult. The Court and country were full of inflammable materials; and in such a state of things, events apparently trifling might produce a general convulsion. So at least thought Nicolson, the English resident at Edinburgh, on the occurrence of an event which, to feudal ears, sounded

[1] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4738, p. 1184.

trifling enough. David Forrester, a retainer of Mar, and bailiff of Stirling, when riding from Edinburgh to that town, was, on some love-quarrel, waylaid and murdered by the Laird of Dunipace, assisted by the Bruces and the Livingstons, who belonged to the Chancellor's faction. Mar instantly accepted this as a defiance; assembled a body of six hundred horse; vowed a deadly revenge; and interdicting the body from being buried, carried it along with him, displaying before it, on two spears, a ghastly picture of Forrester, all mangled and bleeding as he had died. In this way the Earl, in his steel jack, and his men armed to the teeth, carried his murdered vassal in a bravado through the lands of the Livingstons and Bruces, which lay near Linlithgow, on the road between Edinburgh and Stirling; dividing his little force into three wards, and expecting a ruffle with Buccleugh and Cessford, who were reported to be mustering their friends. But the peremptory remonstrances of the King prevented an immediate collision; and a "day of law," as it was then termed, was appointed for the trial of Forrester's slaughter.[1]

James' labour to preserve peace was, indeed, incessant; and but for his vigour and courage, the various factions would have torn the country in pieces. The Chancellor had now gained to his side the powerful assistance of the house of Hamilton; so that his strength was almost irresistible. With his strength, however, increased the odium and unpopularity of his

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 12th July, 1595. Also, Ibid., same to same, 24th June, 1595.

measures. It was now well known that he had been the chief assistant of Huntly in the murder of Murray. He was branded as a hypocrite: all smiles and professions upon the seat of justice, but deep, bloody, and unscrupulous when off it; expressing great love to the Kirk and the ministers, yet careless of practical religion; humble and devoted, as he said, to his sovereign, yet really so haughty, that he did not hesitate to measure his strength with the highest nobles in the land. It was this which provoked Mar, Argyll, and the rest of the ancient earls.

On one occasion James, observing Maitland's defiance, took him roundly to task—reminding him that he was but his creature, a man of yesterday, a cadet of a mean house compared with Mar, who had a dozen vassals for his one;[1] and that it ill became him to enter into proud speeches, or compare himself with the old nobles, and raise factions with Glammis and the Queen against the master to whom he owed all. Pasquils too, and biting epigrams, prognosticating some fatal end, were found pinned to his seat in the Court.[2] But Maitland was naturally courageous, and believed himself powerful enough to keep head against the worst. Hamilton, Hume, Fleming, Livingston, Buccleugh, Cessford, with the Master of Glammis, had now joined him against Mar; and the Queen, finding herself thus supported, renewed her efforts to obtain possession of the young Prince. The King

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr John Colvil to Sir R. Cecil, 2d August, 1595.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Advices from Edinburgh, 20th March, 1594-5.

was inexorable. He had been heard to swear that, were he on his death-bed and speechless, his last sign should be that Mar should have the boy; and the Queen, in despair, took to bed and pretended a mortal sickness. James shut his ears when the news was brought him, and declared it all a trick. At last the lady, between anger and the agitation incident to her situation, for she was about to be confined, fell truly sick. The Mistress of Ochiltree, and a jury of matrons, sat upon her malady, and pronounced it no counterfeit; and James, in real alarm, hurried from Falkland. To his disgust and anger, it was told him that Buccleugh and Cessford, the two men whom he then most dreaded, were with her; but they did not dare abide his coming: and a reconciliation, half stormy, half affectionate, took place. She renewed her clamour for the keeping of the Prince: he upbraided her for leaguing with such desperate men as Buccleugh and Cessford, who, in truth, at that moment were plotting to restrain his person, seize the heir of the throne, and arraign his governor, one of the most faithful of his nobles, of high treason. To humour her would have been the extremity of weakness, and only playing his enemies' game, who, he said, should find that, though he loved her, he could keep his purpose and be master in his own kingdom.[1] This resolute temper saved the monarch. The Chancellor con-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 26th July, 1595. See also, Ibid., same to same, 24th July, 1595. Also, Mr John Colvil to Sir R. Cecil, 2d August, 1595. Also, Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, 4th August, 1595.

trolled Buccleugh, who alleged that they were throwing away their best opportunity: now they could seize the King; next day they themselves might be in fetters. All was ready: the King, the Prince, the government, by one bold stroke might be their own. But Maitland's heart failed, or his loyalty revived. He forbade the enterprise. James rode back to Falkland; and when he next visited Edinburgh, his strength was such that he could defy his enemies.[1] The ministers of the Kirk, scandalized by the divisions in the royal family, now remonstrated with the Queen, awakened her to a higher sense of her conjugal duties, and convinced her, that to renounce all factions, and follow the commands of her royal husband, was her only safe and Christian course.[2] A letter, written at this time by Nicolson, the English Envoy at the Scottish Court, to Sir Robert Bowes, who, at his own earnest request, had been suffered to resign his place as resident Ambassador, gives us an interesting account of this reconciliation and its effects:—

"The King and Queen are lovingly together now at Falkland: the King to go to Stirling to-morrow, and so to his buck-hunting in Lennox and Clydesdale; and after to return to the Queen to St Johnston's, there to receive the communion together. The Queen first goeth to Sir R. Melvil's house, the Earl of Rothes', and other places, before she goes to St John-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 27th May, 1595.
[2] MS. St. P. Off., Colvil, 18th August., 1595. Same, 20th August.

ston's. My Lord of Mar and she have spoken, by the King's means. At the first she was very sharp with Mar, but in the end gave him good countenance. Mr Patrick Galloway, in his sermon, was occasioned to teach of the duties of man and wife, each to the other; and spoke so persuasively for the keeping their duties therein, as the Queen thereon spake and conferred with him, and gave good ear to his advices, and promiseth to follow the same; and hath said that she will have him with her.

"The King caused Mr David Lindsay to travel with the Queen, to see what he could try out of them; whereupon Mr David and the Queen had long conference. And in the end, the Queen said, 'Let the King be plain with the Queen, and the Queen should be plain with the King;' which Mr David showed to the King, causing him to receive the same even then out of the Queen's own mouth: whereupon there was good and kind countenance and behaviour between them; both of them agreeing to satisfy each other: as Mr David looketh that, ere this, the King knoweth who hath persuaded the Queen to these former courses; and the Queen who hath moved the King to this strangeness with the Queen; and that some will be found to have dealt doubly and dangerously with them both. The King intendeth, by little and little, to draw the Queen to where Mar is, and there to stay her from these parts, and the company of Buccleugh, Cessford, and the rest. Mr David holdeth the Chancellor to be very honest between both

parties, and to be for the King; but whatsoever he doeth, it is with consent and leave of the Master of Glammis, Buccleugh, and Cessford; who, if the Chancellor should do otherwise, and they know of it, would be the Chancellor's greatest enemies, and most dangerous. * * The Lord Hume hath promised to follow the King, and is presently with him: so as it is held that the Queen's faction is breaking. Always some think, that as the King intends by policy to win the Queen, so the Queen intends to win the King for the advantage of that side; and I pray God that this prove not too true, that in these fair flowers there prove not yet sharp pricks. As to the slaughter of David Forster, my Lord of Mar, I think, shall give assurance, and keep on fair terms with such of the Livingstons and Bruces as were not executioners of David's murder; which executioners, for this cause, are to be banished the country by their own friends."[1]

While the Court of Holyrood was occupied in gossiping upon such scenes of domestic intrigue and conjugal reconciliation, the Queen of England began bitterly to repent her neglect of Scotland, and to look with alarm to a storm which threatened her on the side of the Isles. She was now trembling for her empire in Ireland, where Tyrone had risen in formidable force, and, assisted with Roman gold and Spanish promises, threatened to wrest from her hands the fairest provinces of the kingdom. In these cir-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Sir R. Bowes, 15th August, 1595.

cumstances, both Elizabeth and the Irish Prince looked for assistance and recruits to the Scottish Isles. These nurseries of brave soldiers and hardy seamen were now able to furnish a formidable force; a circumstance not unknown to the English Queen, as her indefatigable minister Burghley, whose diplomatic feelers were as long as they were acute and sensitive, kept up a communication with the Isles. From a paper written in the end of the year 1593, by one of his northern correspondents,[1] it appears that the Isles could, on any emergency, fit out "a force of six thousand hardy troops, inured to danger both by sea and land, and equipt for war on either element. Of these, two thousand wore defensive armour, actons, habergeons, and knapsculls;[2] the rest were bowmen or pikemen; but many, adds the Island statist, had now become harquebuseers. This force, it is to be observed, was independent of those left at home to labour the ground; the whole of the Isles being different from the rest of feudal Scotland in one essential respect, "that they who occupied the ground, were not charged to the wars."[3] Of this Western archipelago, the principal islands were Lewis and Skye, lying to the north, Islay and Mull to the south; and amongst the chief leaders who assumed the state and independence

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Dec., 1593. Note of the West Isles of Scotland, for the Lord Treasurer.

[2] Acton, a quilted leathern jacket, worn under the armour; habergeon, a breast-plate of mail; knapscull, a steel cap or helmet.

[3] MS. St. P. Off., Dec., 1593. Note of the West Isles of Scotland, for the Lord Treasurer.

of little princes, were the Earl of Argyll, Lauchlan Maclean of Duart, Angus Macdonald of Dunyveg, Donald Gorm Macdonald of Sleat, and Roderick Macleod of Harris, known in traditionary song as Ruari Mor.[1] Of these chiefs, the Lord of Duart, commonly called Lauchlan Mor, was by far the most talented and conspicuous; and, as Elizabeth well knew, had the power of bridling or letting loose that formidable body of troops which Donald Gorm and Ruari Mor were now collecting to assist her enemies in Ireland. Lauchlan Mor was, in all respects, a remarkable person; by no means illiterate, for he had received his nurture in the low country, and had married a daughter of the Earl of Glencairn. But in war and personal prowess he had then no equal: an island Amadis of colossal strength and stature; and possessing, by the vigour of his natural talents, a commanding influence over the rude and fierce Islesmen. It is curious to trace Elizabeth's connexion with this man. The Lord of Duart's confidential servant happened to be a certain shrewd Celt, named John Achinross; he, in turn, was connected by marriage with Master John Cunningham, a worthy citizen and merchant in Edinburgh. This honest bailie of the capital, forming the link between savage and civilized life, corresponded with Sir Robert Bowes; Bowes with Burghley or Sir Robert Cecil; and thus Elizabeth, sitting in her closet at Windsor or Green-

[1] Gregory's History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, p. 261.

wich, moved the strings which could assemble or disperse the chivalry of the Isles. This is no ideal picture, for the letters of the actors remain. As early as March, 1594-5, Achinross informed Bowes that Maclean and Argyll were ready, not only to stay the Clandonnell, who, under Donald Gorm, were then mustering to assist Tyrone; but that Maclean himself would join the English army in Ireland, if Elizabeth would despatch three or four ships to keep his galleys whilst they attacked the enemy.[1] As the summer came on, and the fleet of Donald and his associates waited only for a fair wind, Cunningham hurried to the Isles, had a conference with Maclean, and thence rode post to London, where, in an interview with Sir Robert Cecil, he urged the necessity of instant action and assistance.[2] The bridle which the Laird of Duart held over the Islesmen was simple enough; being a garrison of six hundred mercenaries, well armed, and ready to be led by him, on a moment's warning, against any island chief who embarked in foreign service, and left his lands undefended at home.[3] The support of this force, however, required funds: Elizabeth demurred; Maclean was obliged to disband his men;

[1] MS. St. P. Off., 25th March, 1594-5, Contents of John Achinross' letter to Robert Bowes.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., John Cunningham to Sir R. Bowes, 25th June, 1595. Also, Maclean of Duart to Sir R. Cecil, 4th July, 1595. Also, same to Sir R. Bowes, 4th July, 1595. Also, Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, 5th July, 1595.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., John Achinross to George Nicolson, 22d July, 1595.

and the most part of the fleet weighed anchor, and bore away for Ireland.[1] It consisted of a hundred sail, of which fifty were galleys, the rest smaller craft; and the number of soldiers and mariners was estimated at about five thousand.[2] Nine hundred men, however, under the Captain of the Clan Ranald,[3] still remained; and as they passed Mull had the temerity to land for the night; running their "galleys, boats, and birlings," into a little harbour, where they imagined themselves secure. But Maclean, by what Achinross termed "a bauld onset and prattie feit of weir," took the whole company prisoners, threw the chiefs into irons, sent them to his dungeons in his different castles, appropriated their galleys, and transported the common men to the mainland.[4] Amongst the chief prisoners then taken, were the Captain of Clanranald and three of his uncles, the Laird of Knoydart, M'Ian of Ardnamurchan, Donald Gorm's brother, and others; and an account of the surprise was immediately transmitted by John Achinross to Nicolson, the English Envoy at the Court of James. We can pardon the enthusiasm and abominable orthoepy of this devoted Highland servant when he exclaims: "My maister is acquentit with thir prattie onsettis without respect to number, findand

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 26th July, 1595.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Mr George Areskine to Nicolson, Denoon, 31st July, 1595.

[3] Ibid., same to same.

[4] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Achinross to Nicolson, 31st July, 1595.

vantage: for divers tymis he plaid this dance heir aganis his enemies. I assuir you, thir men that ar tane and in captivity ar the maist douttit and abil men in the Ilis. Lat your guid maister and Sir Robert comfort thame with this gude luke, done be ane vailyeant man of weir, and ane man of honor, in beginning of her Majestie's service."[1]

Elizabeth was delighted with this exploit of Lauchlan Mor, assured him of her gratitude and friendship, and sent a more substantial proof than words, in a present of a thousand crowns: an "honourable token of her favour," as he called it in a letter to Cecil, in which he promised all duty and service to the Queen. She wrote, at the same time, to the Earl of Argyll,[2] flattered him by some rich token of her regard, and ordered Nicolson, her resident at the Scottish Court, to deliver it and her letter to him in person, at Dunoon in Argyll. All this was successfully accomplished: and so cordially did Maclean and Argyll coöperate, sowing distrust and division amongst the chiefs and leaders who had followed the banner of Donald Gorm and Macleod, that their formidable force only made the coast of Ireland to meet the English ships, which were on the watch for them, enter into a friendly treaty, and disperse to their different ocean nests, before a single effort of any moment had been made. This sudden arrival, and as sudden disappearance of the fleet of

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Achinross to Nicolson, 31st July, 1595.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 1st Aug., 1595.

the Islesmen, appears to have puzzled the chroniclers of the times, and even their more acute modern successor. A black cloud had been seen to gather over Ireland; and men waited in stillness for the growl of the thunder and the sweep of the tempest, when it melted into air, and all was once more tranquillity. This seemed unaccountable, almost miraculous; but the letters of honest John Cunningham, and his Celtic relative Achinross, whose epistles smack so strongly of his Gaelic original, introduce us behind the scenes, and discover Lauchlan Mor as the secret agent, the Celtic Prospero, whose wand dispersed the galleys, and restored serenity to the ocean. The reader may be pleased with an extract from a letter of this brave Lord of Duart to Sir R. Bowes, although his style is a little ponderous, and by no means so polished as the Danish steel axe, with which it was his delight to hew down his enemies: he is alluding to the future plan of the campaign intended by Tyrone and O'Donnell against Elizabeth, and the best way to defeat it.

"The Earl is to pursue you on one side, and O'Donnell is to pursue your lands presently on the other side. They think to harm you meikle by this way. If my opinion were followed out, the Earl and O'Donnell shall be pursued on both the sides; to wit, by your force of Ireland on the one side, and by the Earl of Argyll's force and mine, with my own presence, on this side. To the which, I would that you moved the Earl of Argyll to furnish two thousand men: myself shall furnish other two thousand;

and I would have six or eight hundred of your spearmen, with their *buttis*, [*sic*] and four hundred pikemen. If I were once landed in Ireland with this company, having three or four ships to keep our galleys, I hope in God the Earl should lose that name ere our return. * * * In my name your Lordship shall have my duty of humble service remembered to her Majesty, and commendations to good Sir Robert Cecil, with whom I think to be acquainted. "Your Lordship will do me a great pleasure if you will let me know of anything in Scotland that may pleasure Sir Robert. I am so *hamely*[1] with your Lordship, that without you let me know hereof, I will think that your Lordship does dissimull with me. I am here, in Argyll, at pastime and hunting with the Earl my cousin. I have respect to other kind of hunting nor this hunting of deer. I am hamely with your Lordship, as ye may perceive. At meeting, (for the which I think long,) God willing, we shall renew our acquaintance."[2]

From this island episode we must turn to a different scene, the deathbed of a great minister. The Chancellor Maitland, Lord Thirlstane, had now, for some years, ruled the Court and the country with a firm, unchallenged, and, as many thought, a haughty superiority. He had given mortal offence to the Queen; had provoked the hostility of the highest nobles of the land; and, it was whispered, was more

[1] Hamely; familiar.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Lauchlan Maclean of Duart to Sir R. Bowes, Garvie in Argyll, 22d Aug., 1595.

feared than loved by his royal master. But he had kept his ground, partly by superiority in practical business talents to all his competitors; partly by that deep political sagacity and foresight which made Burghley pronounce him the "wisest man in Scotland;" and, not least of all, by that high personal courage and somewhat unscrupulous familiarity with conspiracy, and even with blood, which blotted most men of this semi-barbarous age. He had, besides, been a pretty consistent Protestant; and although in earlier years he had attacked some of Knox's political dicta, yet recently, the strong and decided part he had adopted against Huntly and the Catholic earls made him a favourite with the ministers of the Kirk. So resistless had he now become, that the Queen and her friends had renounced all opposition, and joined his faction against Mar the Governor of the Prince, the favourite of his royal master, and one of the oldest and most powerful of the higher nobles.[1] In this his palmy state, when plotting new schemes of ambition, and inflaming the King against the Queen; meeting Cessford and Buccleugh, and his other associates, in night trysts; marshalling secretly his whole strength, and laying a "*platt*," as it was then called, or conspiracy against Mar, by which he hoped to hurl him from his height of power, and rule unchecked over his sovereign; he was suddenly seized with a mortal distemper.[2] At

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 1st September, 1595.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Colvil to Cecil, 10th September, 1595. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, 19th September, 1595. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, 22d September, 1595.

first he struggled fiercely against it, tried to throw it off, rode restlessly from place to place, and appeared so active that it was currently said the sickness was only one of his old pretences. But at last the malady mastered him, threw him on his couch, and compelled him, in fear and remorse, to send for the ministers of the Kirk, and implore a visit from the King. James resisted repeated messages: it was even said he had whispered in a courtier's ear that it would be a small matter if the Chancellor were hanged: and when Robert Bruce, one of the leading ministers, rode at four in the morning to Thirlstane, he found the dying statesman full of penitence for neglected opportunities, imploring the prayers of the Kirk, and promising to make many discoveries of strange matters, if God granted him time for amendment and reformation.[1] What appeared to weigh heaviest on his conscience was the part he had acted in sowing dissension between the King and Queen; and he seemed much shaken by fears that many dark dealings would come out on this subject. He expressed sorrow, also, for his "partial information against John Knox and other good men;" and when asked what advice he would leave to the King for the management of his estate, shook his head, observing, "it was too late *speer'd*,"[2]

[1] MS. St. P. Off., 10th Sept., 1595, Advertisements from Scotland. Ibid., Nicolson to Bowes, 22d September, 1595. Ibid., same to same, 24th September. Ibid., same to same, 3d October, 1595. "He [the Chancellor] is sore troubled in conscience, and with fear that his dealings between the King and Queen should come out."

[2] "Speer'd," asked. The question was asked too late.

as his thoughts were on another world. Even his enemies, who had quoted against him the Italian adage, "*Il periculo passato, il santo gabato,*" rejoiced at last to find that the sickness was no counterfeit; and were little able to restrain their satisfaction when news arrived at Court that the Chancellor was no more. He died at Thirlstane on the night of the 3d October; and John Colvil, his bitter enemy, exultingly wrote to England that his faction or party were headless, and must fall to pieces: whilst his royal master publicly lamented and secretly rejoiced; inditing to his memory a high poetical panegyric in the shape of an epitaph, and observing, that he would *weel ken* who next should have the Seals, and was resolved no more to use great men or Chancellors in his affairs, but such as he could correct and were hangable.[1]

All things, however, were thrown loose and into confusion by his death. The Borders, which had been for some time in disorder, became the daily scenes of havoc, theft, and murder; torn with feuds between the Maxwells and the Douglases; ravaged by invasions of the English;[2] and so reckless of all restraint, that the personal presence of the King was loudly called for. At Court the competitors for the Chancellor's place were busy, bitter, and clamorous; in the Kirk the ministers gave warning that the Catholic earls, now in banishment, had been

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 8th Oct., 1595, Nicolson to Bowes. Ibid., same to same, 11th Jan., 1595.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off.; Nicolson to Bowes, 20th Oct., 1595.

plotting their return, and that the Spaniards were on the eve of invading England and Scotland with a mighty force.[1] It was absolutely necessary, they said, that the Kirk should have authority to convene the people in arms, to resist the threatened danger; and that an Ambassador should be sent to England to arrange some plan of common defence.[2] James at once consented to the first proposal, and gave immediate directions for the defence of the country; but he refused to send an Ambassador to Elizabeth, who had rejected his suits and broken her promises, although he had preferred her friendship and alliance to that of any other Prince in Europe. He was, at this moment, he said, ready to act as her Lieutenant against the Spaniards, and perish with England in defence of the true religion.[3] Yet still she withheld her supplies, and treated him with suspicion, notwithstanding the proofs he was daily giving of his sincerity in religion, and although she knew him to be drowned in debt. For this last assertion, the dreadful embarrassment of his finances, there was too good ground; and it had been long apparent that, unless some thorough reform took place, matters must come to an extremity. The office of treasurer was held by the Master of Glammis, a man of great power, and one of the chief friends of the late Chancellor. Sir Robert Melvil was his depute; Seton

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 27th Nov., 1595.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Advertisements from Edinburgh, 6th Dec., 1595.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 27th Nov., 1595.

Laird of Parbreath, filled the office of comptroller; and Douglas, the Provost of Glenclouden, that of collector. All of them had been protected by Thirlstane during his supremacy in the Council; and, it was suspected by the King, had fattened at the royal expense. This idea was encouraged by the Queen, who now lived on the most loving terms with her lord, and omitted no opportunity to point out the rapid diminution of the Crown revenues, and the contrast between her own command of money, out of so small a dowry as she enjoyed, and the reduced and beggarly condition of the household and palaces of her royal consort. On new year's day, coming playfully to the King, she shook a purse full of gold in his face, and bad him accept it as her gift. He asked where she got it. "From my councillors," she replied, "who have but now given me a thousand pieces in a purse: when will yours do the like?"—"Never," said the King; and calling instantly for his collector and comptroller, he dismissed them on the spot, and chose the Queen's councillors as his financial advisers. These were Seton Lord Urquhart, President of the Session, Mr John Lindsay, Mr John Elphinstone, and Mr Thomas Hamilton; to whom James committed the entire management of his revenues and household. It was soon found that the charge would be too laborious for so small a number, and four others were added—the Prior of Blantyre, Skene the Clerk-register, Sir David Carnegie, and Mr Peter Young, Master Almoner. These new officers sat daily in the Upper

Tolbooth, and from their number were called *Octavians*. They acted without salary; held their commissions under the King's hand alone; and by the vigour, good sense, and orderly arrangements which they adopted, promised a speedy and thorough reformation of all financial abuses.[1]

Elizabeth now deemed it necessary to send Sir Robert Bowes once more as her Ambassador to Scotland. He had been recalled from that Court, or rather suffered, at his own earnest entreaty, to return to England, as far back as October 1594;[2] and since that time to the present, (January 1595-6,) the correspondence with England, and the political interests of that kingdom, had been entrusted to Mr George Nicolson, who had long acted as Bowes' secretary; and who, from the time that this minister left Edinburgh till his return to the Scottish Court, kept up an almost daily correspondence with him. Elizabeth instructed Bowes to assure James of her unalterable friendship, but of the impossibility of advancing a single shilling, drained as she was by her assistance to France, without which Henry must have lost his throne; her war in Ireland; and her preparations against Spain, which, at that instant, had fitted out a more mighty armament against her than the Armada of 1588. The Ambassador was intrusted not only with a letter from the English Queen to James, but

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Bowes, 7th Jan., 1595-6. John Colvil, Advertisements from Scotland; from 7th Dec., to 1st Jan., 1595-6.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 19th Oct., 1594.

with a letter and message to Queen Anne, whom he was to greet with every expression of friendship, and to reproach mildly for her reserve in not communicating to Elizabeth the secret history of the late quarrels between her and her royal husband, regarding the government and keeping of the young Prince. He was also to touch on a still more delicate subject —the reports which had reached the Court of England of her change of religion; and to warn her that, although his mistress utterly disbelieved such a slander, she could not be too much on her guard against the crafty men, who were in communication with the Pope, and eager to seduce her to their errors.[1] Bowes' reception by James was gracious and cordial. The King declared his satisfaction in hearing that his good sister was so well prepared against the meditated invasion of the Spaniard, and his own readiness to hazard all—life, Crown, and kingdom, in her defence and his own; but he reminded Bowes of Lord Zouch's arguments and unfulfilled promises; and, whilst he spoke feelingly of his pecuniary embarrassments, and the impossibility of raising soldiers without funds, he hinted significantly, that the Pope and the Catholic earls threw about their gold pieces with an open hand; and did not conceal that large offers had been made to draw him to the side of Spain, although he had no mind to be so "limed." He then mentioned his intention of sending his servant, Mr David Foulis, to communicate to Elizabeth

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Answers to Mr Bowes' articles, 14th Jan., 1595-6. Wholly in Lord Burghley's hand.

the confessions of certain priests whom he had lately seized, and other discoveries with which she ought to be acquainted; and alluding to Doleman's book on the Succession to the English Crown, which had been recently published, observed, that he took it to be the work of some crafty politician in England, drawn up with affected modesty and impartiality, but real malice against every title except that of the King of Spain and his daughter. Bowes assured the King that this famous work, which made so much noise at the time, was written not in England but in Spain, by Persons, an English Jesuit and traitor; but James retained his scepticism.[1]

The Ambassador next sought the Queen, and was soon on very intimate and confidential terms with this Princess, who expressed herself highly gratified by Elizabeth's letter. Nothing, she said, could give her greater delight than to receive such assurances of kindness and affection; and she would readily follow her advice, as of one whom she most honoured, loved, and trusted; but as to the delicate subject of the late differences between her and the King, and her wish to get the Prince into her hands, the matter had been so sudden, and full of peril, that she dared not send either letter or message to the Queen of England. She then threw the blame of the whole on the late Chancellor; who had acted, she said, with great baseness, both towards herself and the King. It was he had first moved her to get the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Lord Burghley, 24th Feb., 1595.

Prince out of Mar's hands; it was he who animated the King against her, persuading him that such removal would endanger his Crown and person: "and yet," said she, addressing Bowes with great animation, and some bitterness, "it was this same man who dealt so betwixt the King and myself, and with the persons interested therein, that the surprise of the body of the King was plotted, and would have taken place at his coming to Edinburgh; but I discovered the conspiracy, and warned and stayed him. Had he come, he must have been made captive, and would have remained in captivity."—"These secrets," said Bowes, in his letter to Elizabeth, "she desired to be commended by my letters to your Majesty's only hands, view, and secrecy; and that none other should know the same." As to her reported change of religion, the Queen frankly admitted that attempts had been made for her conversion to Rome; but all had now passed and failed. She remained a Protestant; and would rather not reveal the names of the practisers. If they again assaulted her religion, Elizabeth should know who they were, and how she had answered them.[1]

The continuance of the rebellion in Ireland, and the intrigues of Tyrone with the Western Isles, had greatly annoyed Elizabeth; and Bowes was ordered to communicate with the King, and with Maclean of Duart, on the subject. He found that James had resolved to adopt speedily some decided measures to bring the Isles into order; and hoped to succeed by

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to the Queen, 24th Feb., 1595.

employing, in this service, the Earl of Argyll, Maclean, and Mackenzie, to whose sister Maclean had lately married his eldest son. The Ambassador had been, as usual, tutored to spare his mistress' purse, whilst he sounded Maclean's "mind, power, and resolution;"[1] and exerted himself to the utmost to drive a hard bargain. He was alarmed, too, with the din of warlike preparations then sounding through the Western archipelago: Donald Gorm was mustering his men, and repairing his galleys; Macleod of Harris had lately landed from Ireland, and was ready to return with fresh power; and Angus Maconnel, another potent chief, was assembling his galleys and soldiers.[2] Maclean himself was in Tiree, then reckoned ten days' journey from Edinburgh; and Argyll, so intent in investigating the murder of Campbell of Calder, now traced to Campbell of Ardkinglas, that Bowes could have no immediate transactions with either. He set, however, Cunningham and Achinross, his former agents, to work; and when these active emissaries got amongst the Highlanders, the storm of letters, memorials, contracts, queries, answers, and estimates, soon poured down on the unhappy head of Bowes; who implored Cecil, but with small success, to send him instructions, and some portion of treasure, to satisfy Elizabeth's Celtic auxili-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 24th Feb., 1595-6.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 6th March, 1595-6. Memorial to John Cunningham, 22d Feb., 1595-6. Answers by Maclean to the Questions proposed by Sir R. Bowes, 30th March, 1596.

aries, who clamoured for gold. Maclean was perfectly ready, as before, to attack Tyrone; and confident that the plan of the campaign, which he had already communicated, if carried into vigorous effect, would reduce the great rebel. But he made it imperative on the Queen to furnish two thousand soldiers, and advance a month's pay to his men. He himself, he said, had neither spared "gear nor pains in the service; and yet her Majesty's long promised present of a thousand crowns had not yet arrived."[1] These remonstrances produced the effect desired. Elizabeth was shamed into some settlement of her promises; and Maclean, with his Island chivalry, declared himself ready to obey her Majesty's orders with all promptitude and fidelity.[2]

The Ambassador speedily discovered that the eighteen months during which he had been absent, had added both energy and wisdom to James' character. It was evident there was more than empty compliment in Nicolson's observation—that, in severity, he began to rule like a King. There was still, indeed, about him much that was frivolous, undignified, and capricious; much favouritism, much extravagance, an extraordinary love of his pleasures; and a passion for display in oratory, poetry, theology, and scholastic disputation, which was frequently ridicu-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 24th Feb., 1595-6. Ibid., 6th March, 1595-6, Bowes to Sir R. Cecil. Ibid., 16th March, 1595-6, Bowes to Cecil. Ibid., Maclean to Bowes, Coll, 18th March, 1595-6. Ibid., Maclean's Answers to Bowes, 30th March, 1596.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 7th April, 1596.

lous; but with all this, he was dreaded by his nobles, and compelled respect and obedience. As Elizabeth advanced to old age, his eye became steadily fixed on the English crown, which he considered his undoubted right; and the one great engrossing object of his policy was to secure it. His fairest chance, he thought, to gain the respect and good wishes of the English people, when death took from them their own great Princess, was to show that he knew how to rule over his own unruly subjects. Hence his vigorous determination to restrain, by every possible means, the power of the greater nobility; to recruit his exhausted finances; to reduce the Isles, and consolidate his kingdom; and to bridle the claims of the Kirk, in all matters of civil government, or interference with the royal prerogative: whilst he warmly seconded their efforts for the preservation of the Reformed religion, and resistance to the efforts of its enemies.

Not long after Bowes' arrival, the Convention of the General Assembly met in Edinburgh; and the King, then absent on a hunting expedition, broke off his sport, and returned to Holyrood, that he might "honour the Kirk (as Bowes observed) with his presence and his Oration." The Moderator, Mr Robert Pont, warmly welcomed the royal party; which embraced the Duke of Lennox, Lord Hamilton, the Earls of Argyll, Mar, and Orkney: and, addressing the King, thanked him in name of the Assembly for his presence; reminding him of the honour obtained by Constantine, in favouring the ancient Fathers of the Church; and by David, in

dancing before the ark. In reply, James professed his zeal for religion since his youth up. He had ever esteemed it, as he declared, more glory to be a Christian than a King, whatever slanders to the contrary were spoken against him. It was this zeal which moved him to convene the present Assembly: for being aware of the designs of Spain, their great enemy, against religion and this isle, he was anxious to meet, not only the ministry, but the barons and gentlemen; to receive their advice, and resolve on measures to resist the common enemy. Two points he would press on them: reformation and preparation; the reformation of themselves, clergy, people, and King. For his own part, he never refused admonition; he was ever anxious to be told his faults; and his chamber door should never be closed to any minister who reproved him. All he begged was, that they would first speak privately before they arraigned him in open pulpit. He hated the common vice of ambition; but of one thing he was really ambitious—to have the name of James the Sixth honoured as the establisher of religion, and the provider of livings for the ministry throughout his whole dominions. And now as to his second point, preparation against the common enemy, one thing was clear: they must have paid troops. The country must be put to charges. The times were changed since their forefathers followed each his lord or his laird to Pinky field; a confused multitude, incapable of discipline, and an easy prey to regular soldiers, as the event of that miserable day could testify. Of how many great

names had it been the wreck and ruin! Since then the fashion and art of war had entirely altered; and he protested it was a shame that Scotland should be lying in careless security, whilst all other countries were up and in arms.[1]

This speech gave great satisfaction to the ministers; and their joy was increased by a message brought to them soon after by Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce, intimating the King's resolution to have the whole Kirks in Scotland supplied with ministers, and endowed with sufficient stipends. He requested the Kirk to cause their Commissioners to meet with those councillors and officers whom he had appointed for this purpose, and to fix upon some plan for carrying his resolution into effect. But he commanded his Commissioners to represent to the ministers of the Kirk how much this good work was hindered by themselves. Why did they teach the people that the King and his councillors resisted the planting of kirks, and swallowed up the livings of the clergy, when they were truly most willing that the whole kirks should be planted, and the rents of the ministers augmented, as far as could be obtained with consent of the nobility and the tacksmen of the teinds, whose rights, without order of law, could not be impaired?[2]

[1] MS. St. P. Off., 25th March, 1596, The King of Scots' Speech at the Assembly of the Ministry. Ibid., Bowes to Lord Burghley, 26th March, 1596.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Instructions to Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce. Answers of the General Assembly to the same, 30th March, 1596.

The Assembly received such propositions with the utmost satisfaction; and whilst they protested their ignorance that any of their number had given, in their discourses, any just cause of offence, it would be their care, (they said,) in future, so wisely to handle their doctrine, that neither King nor Council should be discouraged in the furtherance of their good work. Meantime, before they separated, they would humbly beseech his Majesty to examine and remove "certain griefs which still eat like a canker into the body of the Kirk." Divers Jesuits and excommunicated Papists were entertained within the country, confirming, in error, those already perverted; endangering the unstable, and holding out hopes of the return of the Papist earls, with the assistance of strangers. The lands of these forfeited traitors were, to the grief of all good men, still peaceably enjoyed by them; their confederates and friends suffered to go at large; whilst the laws, not only against such treasons, but on all other points, were so partially administered, that a flood of crime, murders, oppressions, incests, adulteries, and every species of wrong inundated the land, and threatened to tear society in pieces.[1]

To this remonstrance a favourable answer was returned; and nothing but fair weather appeared between the sovereign and the Kirk. Yet it was whispered that, beneath this serenity, James had some perilous projects in his head, and meditated a restoration of

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Instructions to Mr John Preston and Mr Edward Bruce. Answers of the General Assembly to the same, 30th March, 1596.

the Catholic earls.[1] All, however, was quiet for the moment; and the King was looking anxiously for the return of his envoy Foulis, who had been sent to Elizabeth, when an event occurred on the Borders which threatened to throw everything into confusion. Sir Walter Scott of Buccleugh, a baron of proud temper, undaunted courage, and considered one of the ablest military leaders in Scotland, was at this time Warden of the West Marches; having for his brother warden of England, Lord Scrope, also a brave and experienced officer. Scrope's deputy was a gentleman of the name of Salkeld; Buccleugh's, a baron of his own clan, Robert Scott of Haining; and in the absence of the principals, it was the duty of these subordinate officers to hold the Warden Courts for the punishment of outlaws and offenders. Such courts presented a curious spectacle: for men met in perfect peace and security, protected by the law of the Borders, which made it death for any Englishman or Scotsman to draw weapon upon his greatest foe, from the time of holding the Court till next morning at sunrise. It was judged that, in this interval, all might return home; and it is easy to see that, with such a population as that of the Borders, nothing but the most rigid enforcement of this law could save the country from perpetual rapine and murder. William Armstrong of Kinmont, or in the more graphic and endearing phraseology of the Borders, *Kinmont Willie*, was at this time one of the most notorious and gallant thieves or freebooters in Lid-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 18th May, 1596.

desdale. He was himself a man of great personal strength and stature, and had four sons, Jock, Francie, Geordie, and Sandie Armstrong, each of them a braver and more successful moss-trooper than the other. Their exploits had made them known and dreaded over the whole district; and their father and they had more "Bills filed" against them at the Warden Courts, more personal quarrels and family feuds to keep their blood hot and their hands on their weapons, than any twenty men in Liddesdale. This Willie of Kinmont, who was a retainer of Buccleugh and a special favourite of his chief, had been attending a Warden Court, held by the English and Scottish depute Wardens, at a place named the Dayholm of Kershope, where a small *burn* or rivulet divides the two countries, and was quietly returning home through Liddesdale, with three or four in company, when he was suddenly attacked by a body of two hundred English Borderers, chased for some miles, captured, tied to a horse, and carried in triumph to Carlisle castle; where Lord Scrope the Governor and Warden cast him, heavily ironed, into the common prison. Such an outrageous violation of Border law was instantly complained of by Buccleugh, who wrote repeatedly to Lord Scrope, demanding the release of his follower; and receiving no satisfactory reply, swore that he would bring Kinmont Willie out of Carlisle castle, quick or dead, with his own hand.[1] The threat was esteemed a mere bravado; for the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., The names of such as enforced the Castle for Kinmont; dated, in Burghley's hand, 13th April,

castle was strongly garrisoned and well fortified, in the middle of a populous and hostile city, and under the command of Lord Scrope, as brave a soldier as in all England. Yet Buccleugh was not intimidated. Choosing a dark tempestuous night, (the 13th April,) he assembled two hundred of his bravest men at the Tower of Morton, a fortalice on "the debateable land," on the water of Sark, about ten miles from Carlisle. Amongst these, the leader whom he most relied on was Wat Scott of Harden: but along with him were Wat Scott of Branxholm, Wat Scott of Goldielands, Jock Elliot of the Copshaw, Sandie Armstrong son to Hobbie the Laird of Mangerton, Kinmont's four sons—Jock, Francie, Sandie, and Geordie Armstrong, Rob of the Langholm, and Willie Bell the Red-cloak; all noted and daring men. They were well mounted, armed at all points, and carried with them scaling ladders, besides iron crowbars, sledge-hammers, hand-picks, and axes. Thus furnished, and favoured by the extreme darkness of the night, they passed the river Esk, rode briskly through the Grahames' country, forded the Eden, then swollen over its banks, and came to the brook Caday, close by Carlisle, where Buccleugh made his men dismount, and silently led eighty of them, with the ladders and iron tools, to the foot of the wall of the base or outer court of the castle. Everything favoured them: the heavens were as black as pitch, the rain descended in torrents; and as they raised their ladders to fix them on the cope-stone, they could hear the English sentinels challenge as they walked their rounds. To their

rage and disappointment, the ladders proved too short; but finding a postern in the wall, they undermined it, and soon made a breach enough for a soldier to squeeze through. In this way a dozen stout fellows passed into the outer court, (Buccleugh himself being the fifth man who entered,[1]) disarmed and bound the watch, wrenched open the postern from the inside, and thus admitting their companions, were masters of the place. Twenty-four troopers now rushed to the castle jail, Buccleugh meantime keeping the postern, forced the door of the chamber where Kinmont was confined, carried him off in his irons, and sounding their trumpet, the signal agreed on, were answered by loud shouts and the trumpet of Buccleugh, whose troopers filled the base court. All was now terror and confusion, both in town and castle. The alarum-bell rang, and was answered by his brazen brethren of the cathedral and the town-house; the beacon blazed up on the top of the great tower; and its red, uncertain glare on the black sky and the shadowy forms and glancing armour of the Borderers, rather increased the horror and their numbers. None could see their enemy or tell his real strength. Lord Scrope, believing, as he afterwards wrote to Burghley, that five hundred Scots were in possession of the castle, kept himself close within his chamber. Kinmont Will himself, as he was carried on his friend's shoulders beneath the Warden's window, roared out a lusty "Good night" to his Lordship; and in a

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., The names of such as enforced the Castle for Kinmont.

wonderfully brief space Buccleugh had effected his purpose, joined his men on the Caday, remounted his troopers, forded once more the Esk and the Eden, and bearing his rescued favourite in the middle of his little band, regained the Scottish Border before sunrise. This brilliant exploit, the last and assuredly one of the bravest feats of Border warfare, was long talked of; embalmed in an inimitable ballad; and fondly dwelt on by tradition, which has preserved some graphic touches. Kinmont in swimming his horse through the Eden, which was then flooded, was much cumbered by the irons round his ancles; and is said to have drily observed, that often as he had breasted it, he never had such heavy spurs. His master, Buccleugh, eager to rid him of these shackles, halted at the first smith's house they came to within the Scottish Border; but the door was locked, the family in bed, and the knight of the hammer so sound a sleeper, that he was only wakened by the Lord Warden thrusting his long spear through the window, and nearly spitting both Vulcan and his lady.[1]

Jocular, however, as were these circumstances to the victors, the business was no laughing matter to Lord Scrope, who came forth from his bedchamber to find that his castle had been stormed, his garrison bearded, and his prisoner carried off by only eighty men. He instantly wrote to the Privy Council and Lord Burghley, complaining of so audacious an

[1] Contemporary Account in the Warrender MSS.; and MS. Letter, St. P. Off. B.C., Lord Scrope to Burghley. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii. p. 60.

attack upon one of the Queen's castles in time of peace; and advising his royal mistress to insist with James on the delivery of Buccleugh, that he might receive the punishment which so audacious an outrage, as he termed it, deserved. But Buccleugh had much to offer in his defence: he pleaded that Kinmont's seizure and imprisonment had been a gross violation of the law; that it was not until every possible representation had failed, and till his own sovereign's remonstrance, addressed to Elizabeth, had been treated with contempt, that he took the matter into his own hands; and that his Borderers had committed no outrage, either on life or property, although they might have made Scrope and his garrison prisoners, and sacked the city. All this was true; and the King for a while resisted compliance with Elizabeth's demand, in which he was supported by the whole body of his Council and barons, and even by the ministers of the Kirk; whilst the people were clamorous in their applause, and declared that no more gallant action had been done even in Wallace's days.[1] But at last James' spirit quailed under the impetuous remonstrance of the Queen; and the Border chief was first committed to ward in the castle of St Andrews,[2] and afterwards sent on parole to England, where he remained till the outrages of the English Borderers rendered his services as Warden absolutely necessary to preserve the country from havoc.[3]

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 3d July, 1596. Spottiswood, p. 416.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, Aug. 19th, 1596. Ibid., same to same, 12th Oct., 1596.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to the Queen, 10th Nov., 1596.

He was then delivered. It is said that, during his stay in England as a prisoner at large, he was sent for by Elizabeth, who loved bold actions even in her enemies. She demanded of him, with one of those lion-like glances which used to throw her proudest nobles on their knees, how he had dared to storm her castle: to which the Border baron, nothing daunted, replied—"What, Madam, is there that a brave man may not dare?" The rejoinder pleased her; and turning to her courtiers, she exclaimed—"Give me a thousand such leaders, and I'll shake any throne in Europe!"[1]

This obsequiousness of the Scottish King to the wishes of the Queen of England was not without a purpose; for James had now resolved on the restoration of the Catholic earls, and anticipated the utmost opposition, not only from the powerful party of the Kirk, but from Burghley and his royal mistress. The aged Lord Treasurer, who had long managed the whole affairs of Scotland, had recently written to his son, Sir Robert Cecil, now Secretary of State, that he suspected the "Octavians," the eight councillors who now ruled the State, to be little else than "hollow Papists." It was evident, he added, that the King was much governed by them, and that his affection to the "crew" would increase; he advised, therefore, that Bowes, the English Ambassador, should have secret conference with the ministers of the Kirk, who would

[1] Notes on the Ballad of Kinmont Willie. Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, vol. ii. pp. 49, 50. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi. p. 318.

discover the truth, and devise a remedy.[1] This was written in July; and there were good reasons for Burghley's suspicions. As early as May, Bowes had detected the incipient movement in favour of the banished earls, and their resolution to petition the King for their return.[2] They were to make submission to the King and the Church, and to have their cause espoused by the Duke of Lennox. Not long after, the Earl of Huntly landed from the Continent at Eyemouth; and passing in disguise into Scotland, encountered, on his road, the Lord St Colm, whose brother he had slain. Fortunately for the returned exile, his mean dress concealed him from the vengeance of his enemy, and he arrived safely amongst his friends; who, aware of the Court intrigues in his favour, exerted their utmost efforts to procure his restoration. But these were met by cries of horror and warning from the Kirk, which increased to their loudest note when it was reported that Errol had been seen with Huntly at his castle the Bog of Gight, and that Angus had dared to come secretly into Perth, from which he was only driven by a peremptory charge of the magistrates.[3]

Meanwhile the Countess of Huntly, who had much influence at Court, presented some overtures upon the part of her husband. He had never, he said, held any traffic with any individuals whatever, against the reformed religion, since his leaving Scotland, and was

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Burghley to Sir Robert Cecil, 10th July, 1596, addressed, "To my lovying son."

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 18th May, 1596.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 20th Oct., 1596.

ready to abide his trial, if any one dared to accuse him. He was ready, also, to banish from his company all seminary priests and known Papists; and would willingly hold conference on the subject of religion with any ministers of the Kirk, by whose arguments he might possibly be induced to embrace their religion. He would receive, he added, any Presbyterian pastor into his house for his better instruction; would support him at his own expense; would assist the Kirk with his utmost power in the maintenance of their discipline; and, only required, in return, that a reasonable time should be given him to be satisfied in his conscience; and that, meanwhile, he should be absolved from the heavy sentence of excommunication which had been pronounced against him.[1]

Nothing could be more moderate than such requests; but the Kirk fired at the very idea that an excommunicated traitor, as they termed the Earl, who had been guilty of idolatry, a crime punishable by death, and who, in the face of his sentence of banishment, had dared, without license, to return, should have the hardihood to propose any terms whatever. It was whispered that the Spanish faction was daily gaining strength; that the earls would not show themselves so openly unless they knew their return to be acceptable to the King: that the party against the truth and liberty of the Word was bold and confident of success, both in England and at home; and that, if some great and resolute resistance was not instantly made, the

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Offer of the Countess of Huntly, 19th Oct., 1596. Also, Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xvi. p. 305.

Kirk, with all its boasted purity and privileges, would become the prey of Antichrist. To remedy or avert these evils, a day of humiliation was appointed to be observed with more than ordinary rigour; in which the people and the ministry were called upon to weep, between the porch and the altar, for a land polluted by the enemies of God, and threatened with the loss of his favour. A body of sixteen commissioners was selected from the ministers, who were to sit monthly at Edinburgh, under the name of the "Council of the Church:" their duty was to provide, according to the ancient phrase, "*Ne quid Ecclesia detrimenti caperet;*" and through them a constant correspondence was kept up with all parts of the realm.[1]

These proceedings alarmed the King, who could see no good grounds for the erection of so formidable a machinery against what he deemed an imaginary attack, and directed some members of his Privy Council to hold a meeting with the more moderate ministers, and persuade them of the groundlessness of their apprehensions. If, he said, the three earls were repentant; if they had already suffered exile and were solicitous to hear the truth and return to their country and the bosom of the Church, why should he, their Prince, be precluded from the exercise of mercy, the brightest jewel in his prerogative? and why, above all, should the Church, whose doors ought ever to stand open to returning penitents, shut them remorselessly in their faces, and consign them to darkness and despair?

[1] Spottiswood, p. 418.

These sentiments of the King were as politic as they were merciful; for in the present state of the kingdom, considering Elizabeth's advanced age and the power of the Roman Catholics in England as well as in his own dominions, nothing could have been more unfavourable to his title of succession than to have become a religious persecutor. Indeed, the arguments of the more violent amongst the ministers were revolting and absurd. The crime of which the Catholic earls had been guilty (so they reasoned) was of that atrocious nature which rendered pardon, by the civil power, impossible. They were idolaters and must die the death; though, upon repentance, they might be absolved by the Kirk from the sentence of spiritual death.[1] Such a merciless mode of reasoning, proceeding, as Spottiswood has remarked, rather from "passion than any good zeal," greatly disgusted the King; who perceived that, under the alleged necessity of watching over the purity of the faith, the Kirk were erecting a tribunal independent alike of the law and the throne. Nor did James conceal these sentiments; inveighing bitterly against the ministers, both in public and private, at council and table. It was in vain that some of the brethren (for here, as in all other popular factions, there was a more moderate party, who were dragged forward and hustled into excesses by the more violent) entreated him to explain the causes of his offence, and declared their anxiety for an agreement. "As to agreement," said

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 418, 419.

the monarch, "never will there be an agreement as long as the limits of the two jurisdictions, the civil and the ecclesiastical, are so vague and undistinguishable. The lines must be strongly and clearly drawn. In your preachings, your license is intolerable; you censure both Prince, Estate, and Council; you convoke General Assemblies without my authority; you pass laws under the allegation that they are purely ecclesiastical, but which interfere with my prerogative, and restrict the decisions of my council and my judges. To these my allowance or approbation is never required; and under the general head of 'Scandal,' your Synods and Presbyteries fulminate the most bitter personal attacks, and draw within the sphere of their censure every conceivable grievance. To think of agreement under such circumstances is vain; even if made, it could not last for a moment."[1]

In the midst all this, and when the feelings of the King and the clergy were in a state of high excitement, Mr David Black, one of the ministers of St Andrews, a fierce Puritan, delivered a discourse in which he not only animadverted on the threatened triumph of idolatry at home, but raised his voice against the Prelacy which had established itself in the neighbouring kingdom. The Queen of England, he said, was an atheist; the religion professed in that kingdom nothing better than an empty show, guided by the injunctions of the bishops; and not content with this pageant at home, they were now persuading

[1] Spottiswood, p. 419.

the King to set it up in Scotland. As for his Highness, none knew better than he did of the meditated return of these Papist earls; and herein he was guilty of manifest treachery. But what could they look for? Was not Satan the head of both Court and Council? Were not all Kings devil's bairns? Was not Satan in the Court, in the guiders of the Court, in the head of the Court? Were not the Lords of Session miscreants and bribers, the nobility cormorants, and the Queen of Scotland a woman whom, for fashion's sake, they might pray for, but in whose time it was vain to hope for good?[1]

This insolent attack was followed, as might have been expected, by an indignant complaint of Bowes the English Ambassador; and the offender was immediately cited to appear before the Privy Council. To obey this summons, however, would have been construed into an abandonment of the highest privileges of the Kirk; and Black at once declined the jurisdiction of the tribunal. His "Declinator" is an extraordinary paper; and by the high tone which it assumed, fully justified all the apprehensions of the King. "Albeit," said he, addressing the King and Council, "I am ready, by the assistance of the grace of God, to give a confession, and to stand to the defence of every point of the truth of God, uttered by me, either by opening up of this word, or application thereof, before your Majesty or Council; * * yet, seeing I am brought at this

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Effect of Information against Mr David Black. Moyse's Memoirs, p. 128. Also, MS. St. P. Off., Process against Mr David Black, 9th Dec., 1596.

time to stand before your Majesty and Council, as a judge set to cognosce and discern upon my doctrine, wherethrough my answering to the said pretended accusation might import with the manifest prejudice of the liberties of the Kirk, and acknowledging also of your Majesty's jurisdiction in matters that are mere spiritual, which might move your Majesty to attempt farther in the spiritual government of the Kirk of God: * * Therefore (so he continued) I am constrained, in all humility and submission of mind, to use a *declinature* of the judgment, at least *in prima instantia*, for the following reasons: First, the Lord Jesus, the God of order and not of confusion, as appeared most evidently in all the Kirks of His saints, (of whom only I have the grace of my calling, as His ambassador, albeit most unworthy of that honour to bear His name amongst the saints,) He has given me His Word, and no law nor tradition of man, as the only instructions whereby I should rule the whole actions of my calling in preaching of the Word, administering of the seals thereof, and exercising of the discipline: and in discharge of this commission I cannot fall in the reverence of any evil law of man, but in so far as I shall be found past the compass of my instructions; which cannot be judged accordingly to that order established by that God of order, but [except] by the prophets, whose lips He hath appointed to be the keepers of His heavenly wisdom, and to whom He hath subjected the spirit of the prophets. And now, seeing it is the preaching of the Word whereon I am accused, which is a principal point of my

calling, of necessity the prophets must first declare whether I have kept the bounds of my direction, before I come to be judged of your Majesty: which being done, and I found culpable in transgressing any point of that commission which the Lord has given me, I refuse not to abide your Majesty's judgment in the second instance, and to underly whatsoever punishment it shall be found I have deserved.

"Secondly, because the liberty of the Kirk, and the whole discipline thereof, according as the same has been, and is presently exercised within your Majesty's realm, has been confirmed by divers Acts of Parliament, and approved in the Confession of Faith, by the subscription and acts of your Majesty, and of your Majesty's estate and the whole body of the country, and peaceably enjoyed by the office-bearers of the Kirk in all points, and namely in the foresaid point, anent the judicatory of the preaching of the Word *in prima instantia*, as the practice of late examples evidently will show: therefore, the question concerning my preaching, ought, first, according to the grounds and practice aforesaid, to be judged by the ecclesiastical senate."[1] * * *

This resolute refusal to submit himself to the judgment of the law, greatly enraged the King, and convinced him that the time was come to make a stand against the exorbitant claims of the Kirk. It confirmed him, also, in his resolution to extend his favour to the Catholic earls, upon their due submission; and at all hazards to put down that spirit of

[1] MS. St. P. Off., David Black's Declaration to the King's Majesty and Council, 22d Nov., 1596. Calderwood, p. 337.

dictation and interference which might have soon made the tyranny and license of the ministers intolerable. Having understood, therefore, that a copy of Mr Black's declinator had been sent by the Commissioners of the Kirk to the various Presbyteries throughout the kingdom for their signature, with letters commending the cause to their assistance and prayers, James at once construed this into an act of mutiny; and by a public Proclamation not only discharged the Commissioners from holding any farther meetings, but commanded them to leave the capital and repair within twenty-four hours to their flocks.[1] But this royal order they were in no temper to obey. They instantly convened, and, in the phrase used by their own historian, "laid their letters open before the Lord."[2] The danger, they declared, was imminent; and the ministers of the city must instantly, in their pulpits, deal mightily with the power of the Word against the charge which commanded them to desert their duty. As the spiritual jurisdiction flowed immediately from Christ, and could in no way proceed from a King or civil magistrate: so also the power to convene for the exercise of such jurisdiction came directly from Christ, and could neither be impeded nor controlled by any Christian Prince. They declared, therefore, that they would not obey the proclamation, but remain together to watch over the safety of Christ's Church, now in extreme jeopardy; and sent an angry message to the "Octavians," the eight councillors who then managed the Government,

[1] Calderwood, p. 341. [2] Ibid.

assuring them, that as the Kirk had been in peace and liberty on their coming to office and was now plunged into the greatest troubles, they could not but hold them responsible for the late bitter attacks upon its privileges.

This accusation was indignantly repelled by Seton the President of the Session; and from him the Commissioners of the Kirk repaired to the King; who assured them, with greater mildness than some had expected, that if Black would withdraw his "Declinator" all could be well arranged: a proposal which the more moderate party in the Kirk anxiously advised to be adopted. "At this moment," they said, "the Court stands in some awe of the Kirk; and our wisest plan is to make the best conditions we can. If we measure our strength with the King, we shall be found too weak, and may lose the ground we have gained." But others, more fierce and zealous, arraigned such counsels as Erastian, and worldly wise. To renounce the least of their privileges would, they argued, be the sure way to lose them all: to stand to their ground the only way to prevail. It was God's cause; and He who had the hearts of Princes in His hand would maintain it.[1]

These counsels prevailed. The monarch, irritated by the rejection of his offer, commanded the trial of Black to proceed. So anxious, however, was he to avoid extremities, that after the Judges had pronounced their opinion that the matters charged against him amounted, if proved, to treason, and were within the jurisdiction of the King and Council, he

[1] Calderwood, pp. 340, 341. Spottiswood, p. 423.

deferred the trial till next day; and in the interval sent for some of the ministers, with the hope that, even at this latest hour, some mutual concessions might lead to peace. It had been reported to him, he said, that they were in terror lest their spiritual jurisdiction should be invaded; but nothing could be farther from his mind than any abridgment of the liberties of the Kirk; and he was ready, by a public declaration on this point, to quiet their minds. "But," he continued, "this licentious manner of discoursing of affairs of State in the pulpit cannot be tolerated. My claim is only to judge in matters of sedition, and other civil and criminal causes, and of speeches that may import such crimes, wheresoever they may be uttered—in the pulpit or elsewhere: for surely, if treason and sedition be crimes, much more are they so if committed in the pulpit, where the Word of Truth alone should be taught and heard."

To this some of the ministers replied, that they did not plead for the privilege of place, but for respect due to their message, which was received from God, and far above the control of any civil judicature. "Most true," said James; "and would you keep to your message, there would and could be no strife. But I trust your message be not to rule Estates, and, when matters dislike you, to stir the people to sedition, making both me and my councillors odious by your railings."—"If any dare do so," said the champion of the Kirk, "and have passed the bounds, it is reason he be punished with all extremity; but this question of his having past the bounds must be judged by the

Church."—"And shall not I," said the King, with some asperity, "have power to call and punish a minister that breaketh out in treasonable speeches, but must come to your Presbytery and be a complainer? I have had good proof already what justice ye will do me; and were this a doubtful case, where by any colour the speeches might be justified, there might be some excuse for saying the minister should be convicted by his brethren; but here, what says Mr Black? 'All Kings are devil's bairns; the treachery of the King's heart is discovered.' Who sees not that this man hath passed his bounds? Who will say he hath kept to his message?"

It was easier to demur to this than to answer it; and so convinced were the ministers at the moment of the reasonableness of the King's desires, that after much conference and cavilling, they agreed to withdraw from the contest, till the limits between the civil and spiritual jurisdictions should be discussed and decided in a lawful General Assembly. On his side, also, James relaxed in the rigour of his requisitions. He was content, he said, that Black should be brought to his presence; and on his admission or denial of the truth of the accusations, be judged by three of his own brethren, Mr David Lindsay, Mr James Nicolson, and Mr Thomas Buchanan. Matters were now on the very eve of an amicable adjustment, when it was unfortunately suggested to the King, that by this mode of settlement he would compromise his dignity, and that of his Consort, unless Mr Black first acknowledged his offence against the Queen.

From such a proceeding the indignant minister revolted. He would plead to no offence, he said; for he was guilty of none. The Court, before whom he had been tried, had evinced the most shameless injustice; had refused the most unexceptionable witnesses, who would have amply proved his innocence. Provost, bailies, rectors, deans, principals, and regents of colleges, had been ready to testify in his favour; and the judges had admitted in their place the evidence of ignorant and partial persons, whom it was impossible to believe. Come what might, he would never plead before a Civil tribunal for an alleged Spiritual delinquency; but if the monarch chose to remit him to his lawful judge, the ecclesiastical senate, he would declare the truth; and, if found guilty, cheerfully submit to its censure.[1]

This second declinature enraged the King even more than the first; and having summoned his Council, he commanded the trial to proceed; but no prisoner appeared. The depositions of the witnesses were then read; and Black, in absence, was found guilty of having falsely and treasonably slandered the King, the Queen his royal Consort, his neighbour Princess the Queen of England, and the Lords of Council and Session. It was left to the King to name the due punishment for such offences; but till the royal pleasure were known, he was sentenced to be confined beyond the North Water, and within six days to enter his person in ward.[2] Yet although armed by this sentence,

[1] Calderwood, p. 351. Spottiswood, p. 425.
[2] Id. 427.

and holding the sword of the civil power over the heads of the guilty, James arrested its descent, and to the last showed an anxiety for a compromise. The punishment of Black, he said, should be of the lightest kind; and no ministers should be called before the Privy Council till it had been found in a General Assembly that the King might judge whether they passed the bounds in doctrine. Meanwhile, the acts of Council so obnoxious to the brethren should be deleted, the offensive proclamations amended, and every reasonable safeguard provided against the alleged encroachments upon the liberties of the Kirk.

These amicable feelings were unfortunately construed rather into an admission of weakness than a desire for peace; and the Commissioners of the Kirk, sternly refusing to abate an atom of their demands, declared that no punishment could be inflicted on a man who had not yet been tried. On the other hand, it was urged by Seton, President of the Session, and one of the Octavians, that unless some punishment followed the sentence pronounced upon Black, the King could never make that process a good ground for claiming the jurisdiction over the ministers. The two antagonists therefore, the Kirk and the Crown, found themselves, after these protracted overtures, more mortally opposed to each other than before. The Kirk, protesting that every effort had failed to obtain redress for the wrongs offered to Christ's kingdom, proclaimed a Fast; commanded all faithful pastors to betake themselves to their spiritual armour; caused "the Doctrine," to use the phrase of these times, "to

sound mightily;" and protested that, whatever might be the consequences, they were free of his Majesty's blood.[1]

The King received this announcement with the utmost scorn; commanded the Commissioners instantly to depart the city; ordered Black to enter into ward; and published a Declaration, in which he exposed, in forcible and indignant terms, the unreasonable demands of the Kirk. Out of an earnest desire, he said, to keep peace with the ministers, he had agreed to waive all inquiry into "past causes," till the unhappy differences between the civil and ecclesiastical tribunal had been removed by the judgment of a Convention of Estates and a General Assembly of the ministry. All that he had asked in return was, that his proceedings should not be made a subject of pulpit attack and bitter ecclesiastical railing: instead of listening to which request, they had vilified him in their sermons, accused him of persecution, defended Black, and falsely held him up to his people as the enemy of all godliness. In the face of all such slander and defamation, he now declared to his good subjects, that as it was his determination on the one hand to maintain religion and the discipline of the Church as established by law, so on the other he was resolved to enforce upon all his people, ministers of the Kirk as well as others, that obedience to the laws and reverence for the throne, without which no Christian kingdom could hold together. For this purpose certain Bonds were in preparation, which the ministers

[1] Calderwood, pp. 356, 360. Spottiswood, p. 426.

should be required to subscribe under the penalty of a sequestration of their property.[1]

Meanwhile, the Commissioners having retired from the city, a short breathing time was allowed; and Secretary Lindsay, trusting that the ministers of Edinburgh might now be more tractable than their brethren, prevailed on the King to send for them. As a preliminary to all accommodation, they insisted that the Commissioners should be recalled; and the King, relaxing in his rigour, appeared on the point of acceding to their wishes, when some of the "*Cubiculars*," as the lords of the bed-chamber and gentlemen of the household were called, interposed their ill offices to prevent an agreement. These ambitious and intriguing men had long envied and hated the Octavians, and had hoped, under colour of the recent dissensions in the Church, to procure their disgrace and dismissal. Nothing could be more unfavourable to such a plot than peace between the King and the Kirk: nothing more essential to its success than to fan the flame and stir the elements of discord. This they now set about with diabolical ingenuity. They laboured to make the Octavians odious to the party of the Protestant barons and the ministers. They assured them, that all the hot persecution of Mr Black arose from this hydra-headed crew, of whom they knew the leaders to be Papists. They insinuated to the Octavians that the animosity of their enemies in the Kirk was so implacable as to throw their lives into jeopardy; and they abused the

[1] Spottiswood, p. 426.

King's ear, to whom their office gave them unlimited access, by tales against the citizens of Edinburgh; who mounted guard every night, as they affirmed, over the houses of their ministers, lest their lives should fall a sacrifice to the unmitigable rage of their sovereign.

By these abominable artifices, the single end of which was to destroy the government of the Octavians, the hopes of peace were entirely blasted; and the little lull which had succeeded the retirement of the Commissioners was followed by a more terrific tempest than had yet occurred. The King, incensed at the conduct of the citizens and the suspicion which it implied, commanded twenty-four of the most zealous burgesses to leave the capital within six hours; a proceeding which enraged the ministers, whose indignation blazed to the highest pitch when they received an anonymous letter, assuring them that Huntly had been that night closeted with James. The information was false, and turned out to be an artifice of the "Cubiculars"; but it had the effect intended, for all was now terror in the Kirk. Balcanquel flew to the pulpit; and after a general discourse on some text of the Canticles, plunged into the present troubles of the Kirk, arraigned the "treacherous forms" of which they had been made the victims; and turning to the noblemen and barons who were his auditors, reminded them, in glowing language, of the deeds of their ancestors in defence of the truth; exhorting them not to disgrace their fathers, but to meet the ministers forthwith in

the Little Church. To this quarter so great a crowd now rushed, that the clergy could not make their entrance; but Mr Robert Bruce, pressing forward, at last reached the table where the Protestant barons were seated, and warning them of the imminent perils which hung over their heads, the return of the Papist earls, the persecution of Black, the banishment of the Commissioners and the citizens, conjured them to bestir themselves and intercede with the King.[1]

For this purpose, Lords Lindsay and Forbes, with the Lairds of Barganie and Balquhan, and the two ministers, Bruce and Watson, sought the royal presence, then not far off; for the King was at that moment sitting in the Upper Tolbooth with some of his Privy Council, while the Judges of the Session were assembled in the Lower House. On being admitted with the rest, Bruce informed the monarch that they were sent by the noblemen and barons then convened, to bemoan and avert the dangers threatened to religion. "What dangers?" said James. "I see none; and who dares convene, contrary to my proclamation?"—"Dares!" retorted the fierce Lord Lindsay. "We dare more than that; and shall not suffer the Truth to be overthrown, and stand tamely by." As he said this the clamour increased; numbers were thronging unmannerly into the presence-chamber, and the King, starting up in alarm, and without giving any answer, retreated down stairs to the Lower House, where the Judges were assembled, and commanded the

[1] Spottiswood, p. 427.

doors to be shut. The Protestant lords and ministers upon this returned to the little Kirk, where the multitude had been addressed during their absence by Mr Michael Cranston, who had read to them the history of Haman and Mordecai. This story had worked them up to a point that prepared them for any mischief; and when they heard that the King had turned his back upon their messengers, they became furious with rage and disappointment. Some, dreading the worst, desired to separate; but Lindsay's lion voice was heard above the clamour, forbidding them to disperse. Shouts now arose, to force the doors and bring out the wicked Haman; others cried out "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" and in the midst of the confusion, an agent of the courtiers, or, as Calderwood terms him, "a messenger of Satan sent by the Cubiculars," vociferated "Armour, armour! save yourselves. Fy, fy! bills and axes!" The people now rose in arms; some rushing one way, some another; some, thinking the King was laid hands on, ran to the Tolbooth; some, believing that their ministers were being butchered, flew to the Kirk; others thundered with their axes and weapons on the Tolbooth doors; calling for President Seton, Mr Elphinston, and Mr Thomas Hamilton, to be given up to them, that they might take order with them as abusers of the King and the Kirk. At this moment, had not a brave deacon of the craftsmen, named Wat, with a small guard, beat them back, the gate would have been forced, and none could have answered for the consequences. But

at last the provost, Sir Alexander Hume, whom the shouts of the uproar had reached as he lay on a sick bed, seizing his sword, rushed in, all haggard and pale, amongst the citizens, and with difficulty appeased them into a temporary calm.

James, who was greatly alarmed, now sent the Earl of Mar to remonstrate with the ministers, whom he found pacing up and down, disconsolately, behind the church, lamenting the tumult, and excusing their own part. On being remonstrated with by Mar, all that they required, they said, was the abolition of the acts done in prejudice of the Kirk during the last four weeks; that the President, Comptroller, and Advocate, men suspected in religion, and enemies to the truth, should have no voice in ecclesiastical matters; and that the good citizens who had been banished, should be recalled. These demands being reported, the monarch promised to lay them, when put into proper form, before his Council; and seizing the moment of tranquillity, ventured to open the doors of the Lower Tolbooth, and accompanied by the provost, bailies, and Octavians, slipt quietly into the street, and proceeded to his palace at Holyrood.

Here at last there was safety; and his courage reviving, James expressed himself with the utmost indignation against the ministers and leaders of the late tumult; vowing that they, the town, the barons, and every living soul connected with the recent disgraceful scenes, should bitterly repent them. These sentiments were encouraged by the councillors;

and next morning the King and his whole Court, at an early hour, left the city for Linlithgow. Scarcely had they departed, when a Herald appearing at the Cross, read a proclamation which struck dismay into the hearts of the people. It described the treasonable uproar of the preceding day, which had been raised by the factious ministers of Edinburgh, who, it stated, after having uttered most seditious speeches in pulpit, had assembled with the noblemen, barons, and others; had sent an irreverent message to their sovereign, persuaded the citizens to take arms, and put his Majesty's life in jeopardy. Such treasonable conduct, it declared, had convinced the King that the capital was no longer a fit place for his own residence, or for the ministration of justice; he had therefore himself left it with his Court, and now commanded the Lords of Session, Sheriffs, and all other officers of justice, to remove themselves forth of the town of Edinburgh, and be ready to repair to such other place as should be appointed. At the same time he ordered all noblemen and barons to depart instantly to their own houses, and to forbear any further assembly till they had received the royal permission.[1]

This proclamation had an immediate effect, and caused a great alteration. Men looked sadly and despondingly on each other. The craftsmen and burgesses foretold the utter decay of their town and trade. All seemed in despair: but nothing could intimidate the Kirkmen; and Mr Robert Bruce, one

[1] Spottiswood, p. 429-430.

of their principal leaders, ascending the pulpit, upbraided them with their pusillanimity. "A day," said he, "a day of trial and terror is at hand. The hypocrisy of many, the flagrant iniquity of others, will clearly appear. The trial shall go through all men: from King and Queen to council and nobility, from session to barons, from barons to burgesses, from burgesses to the meanest craftsmen, all will be sifted; and sorry am I that I should see such weakness in so many, that ye dare not utter so much as one word for God's glory and the good cause. It is not we that are parties in this cause. No: the quarrel is betwixt a greater Prince and us. We are but silly men, and unworthy creatures. But it hath pleased Him who ruleth all things, to set us in this Office, and to make us His own mouth, that we should oppose the manifest usurpation intended against His spiritual kingdom; and sorry am I that our cause should be obscured by this late tumult, and that the enemies should be thereby emboldened to pull the crown off Christ's head."[1]

After this stirring address, Lord Hamilton was secretly invited to place himself at the head of the godly barons and other gentlemen, who had embraced the cause of the Kirk; and a proposal was made for the excommunication of Seton the President of the Session, and Hamilton the Lord Advocate; but in the end it was deemed advisable to defer this awful process to the General Assembly, when these offenders might, with greater solemnity, be delivered over to Satan.

[1] Calderwood, p. 366.

Meanwhile, a Fast was proclaimed; and Mr John Welsh, one of the ministers, thundered from one of the city pulpits an extraordinary philippic against the King; taking for his general subject the epistle sent to the angel of the Church at Ephesus. His Majesty, he said, had been possessed with a devil; and one devil having been put out, seven worse spirits were entered in his place. He was, in fact, in a state of frenzy; and it was lawful for the subjects to rise against him, and take the sword out of his hand; just as a father of a family, if visited with insanity, might be seized by his children and servants and tied hand and foot. An execrable doctrine, justly observes Spottiswood, which was yet received by many of the hearers as a sound application.

This insolent attack was scarcely made, when Lord Hamilton, who had at first received the messenger of the Kirk with courtesy, suddenly rode to Linlithgow, and put into the King's hands the letter addressed him by the ministers. It was construed into a direct incitement to rebellion: and certainly its terms went far that way. Addressing themselves to this nobleman, the brethren presumed, they said, that his Lordship was aware of the long conference between his Majesty and them; many concurrings, and as many breaks, in which, at last, the malice of some councillors had come to this, that their stipends were discharged; the Commissioners of the General Assembly banished; Mr David Black convicted of treason and warded; themselves appointed to suffer the like; and now, at last, a great

number of their flock, who had stood in their defence, expelled from the town. They proceeded to state that the people, in this crisis, animated, no doubt, by the Word of God's spirit, took arms; and, unless restrained by their ministers, would, in their fury, have lighted upon many of the councillors, who were threatening destruction, as they believed, to religion and Government. The letter stated that the godly barons, with other gentlemen who were in the town, had convened themselves; they had taken upon them the patronicy of the Kirk and her cause; but they lacked a head, and specially a nobleman to countenance the matter, and with one consent had made choice of Lord Hamilton. "And seeing," so the ministers concluded their inflammatory epistle, "God has given your Lordship this honour, we could do no less than to follow His calling, and make it known to you, that with all convenient diligence you might come here, utter your affection to the good cause, and receive the honour which is offered you."[1]

This letter was subscribed by the leading ministers of the Kirk; Bruce, Balcanquel, Rollock, Balfour, and Watson: but the great nobleman to whom it was addressed, resisted the dangerous preëminence, and highly offended the Kirk by now placing it in the King's hands, who was not slow to take advantage of the discovery. In truth, the tumult recently committed by the citizens, and the part which had been acted in it by the clergy,

[1] Warrender MSS., vol. B., p. 246.

was a prodigious advantage given to the monarch; who quickly perceived it. He was well aware of the difficulty of dealing with the ministers, as long as they confined themselves to their political attacks in the pulpit, and pleaded an independent jurisdiction; but the citizens and bailies were unquestionably amenable to the authority of the Crown and the laws. They were, with scarcely a single exception, Protestants; warmly attached to the Kirk, and a principal element in its power. All this the King knew; and when he saw that he had them within his grasp, he determined they should feel the full weight of his resentment. It was in vain that the citizens sought to appease the royal wrath, and despatched the humblest messages to implore its removal, and invite their sovereign back to his capital. The envoys were refused access; the provost was commanded to imprison the ministers, who were accused of having instigated a tumult which had endangered the life of their prince; the outrage was declared treason by an act of Council; the capital was pronounced unsafe; the nobility and gentry interdicted from resorting thither; the inferior judicatories and the Supreme Court removed; and the ominous answer returned by the King to the citizens, that he meant ere long to come to Edinburgh, in person, and let them know that he was their sovereign.

To enforce this, James summoned his Highland nobles with their fierce attendants, and his Border barons with their lawless followers. Dark surmises ran

through the Court, and soon reached the startled ears of the townsmen, that their city was doomed to indiscriminate pillage; it was to be sacked, perhaps razed, and sown with salt. Will of Kinmont, it was said, was to be let loose upon it; and his name, always formidable, and now more notorious from his recent escape, struck terror into the hearts of the burghers. It was in vain that the ministers attempted to rally the courage of their flocks, spoke of excommunicating their enemies in the Council, and drew up a bond for the defence of religion. The magistrates refused to subscribe it; the craftsmen, torn between their love of gain and their devotion to sound doctrine, began to look coldly and doubtfully upon their pastors; and the four clergymen, who had taken the most active part in the tumult, dreading an arrest, fled by night to Newcastle.[1] But these were not the days when the artisans and merchants of a feudal capital were subjects of easy plunder. All had arms, and knew well how to use them; and the shops, booths, and warehouses, were soon emptied of their goods, which were stowed away in the strongest houses of the town. The sturdy proprietors then took to their weapons, mounted guard over their stores, and determined that neither Catherans nor Borderers should spoil them without a bloody struggle.[2]

On the 1st January, the dreaded entry of the monarch took place. The streets and gates had, early in the morning, been occupied by the various chiefs and clans appointed for the purpose. The

[1] Spottiswood, p. 431. [2] Birrel's Diary.

provost and magistrates delivered the keys of the city on their knees to the King; professed their deep sorrow for the late tumult, of which, they declared, they were individually guiltless; and solicited the strictest scrutiny into the whole. As to the inflammatory sermons, and the conduct of their ministers who had been recently outlawed, they should, they said, never be re-admitted to their charge without the permission of the King; and at the next election of the civic authorities, such persons only should be chosen as had previously been approved of by the Crown.[1] James then proceeded to the High Church, heard a sermon from Mr David Lindsay, and made an oration to the people, in which he justified himself, cleared his councillors, and deeply blamed the ministers.[2] He spoke of his own early education in the reformed religion; his solemn determination to maintain it; to extirpate from his realm all unrepentant idolaters, and to provide for the preaching of God's Word, which had been silent in the capital since the flight of those unworthy pastors who had profaned the pulpits by their seditious harangues. Having thus somewhat reassured the trembling citizens, he deemed that he had gone far enough for the present; and not only declined accepting their offers of submission, but at a succeeding Convention of Estates, held at Holyrood, anew declared the tumult to be treason, intimated his resolution to prosecute the town criminally, and commanded the provost

[1] Maitland, vol. ii., p. 1278.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Cecil, 4th January, 1596.

and bailies to enter their persons in ward, within the town of Perth, before the 1st of February; to remain there in durance till acquitted, or found guilty of the uproar.[1] The sword was thus kept suspended over the heads of the unhappy magistrates and their capital; and it was quite apparent that the King, having become convinced of his own strength, was determined to defer the moment of mercy till he had accomplished some great purpose which now filled his mind.

This was nothing less than the establishment of Episcopacy. The recent excesses of the more violent ministers had made the deepest impression upon the monarch; and it was evident to him, that if the principles of independent jurisdiction which they had not hesitated to adopt, were preached and acted upon, there must ensue a perpetual collision between the ecclesiastical and civil authorities. He longed, therefore, to use the words of Spottiswood, to see "a decent order established in the Kirk, which should be consistent with the Word of God, the custom of primitive times, and the laws of the realm;" and he believed that no fitter moment could occur to carry this great object than the present. His first step was to summon a General Assembly of the Church to meet at Perth on the last of February. His next was an act of conciliation. The eight councillors who, under the name of Octavians, had, for the last eighteen months, managed the financial department of the State, and indirectly controlled

[1] Spottiswood, p. 433.

every part of the Government, had been especially obnoxious to the Protestant clergy, and to a section of the courtiers and bed-chamber lords. They were hated by the ministers, who suspected them to be mostly concealed Roman Catholics; by the *Cubiculars*, as the courtiers were called, because they had curtailed their perquisites, and introduced a strict economy; and the King, by accepting their resignations, believed that he would popularize his intended ecclesiastical innovations.[1] These changes he now prefaced by drawing up and circulating amongst the different Synods and Presbyteries, no less than fifty-five questions, involving the most important points in dispute between himself and his clergy; not, as he solemnly declared, for the purpose of troubling the peace of the Kirk by thorny disputes, but to have its polity cleared, its corruptions eradicated, and a pleasant harmony established between himself and its ministers.[2] The spirit and tendency of these questions gave great alarm to the brethren. The King inquired whether matters of external ecclesiastical regimen, might not be disputed, *salvâ fide et religione*; whether the Prince by himself, or the pastors by themselves, or both conjunctly, should establish the Acts concerning the government of the Kirk; whether the consent of a majority of the flock, and also of the patron, was necessary in the election of pastors; whether there could be a lawful minister, without *impositio manuum*,

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Burghley, 13th January, 1596-7.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 434.

whether pastors should be permitted to allude by name to councillors and magistrates in the pulpit, or to describe them so minutely as to leave no doubt whom they meant, although the parties so attacked were guiltless of notorious vices, and had not been previously admonished; whether the pastor should be confined to the doctrine directly flowing from his text, or might preach all things on all texts; whether the General Assembly of the Kirk might be convoked without consent of the Prince, he being *pius et Christianus Magistratus;* whether it were lawful to excommunicate such Papists as had never professed the reformed faith; whether a Christian Prince had power to annul a notoriously-unjust sentence of excommunication, and to amend such disorders as might occur either by pastors failing in their duties, or by one jurisdiction usurping the province of another; whether Fasts for general causes might be proclaimed without the command of the Prince; whether any causes infringing upon the civil jurisdiction, or interfering with vested private rights, might be disputed and ruled in the ecclesiastical courts; and whether the civil magistrate had not a full right to stay all such proceedings?[1]

These searching interrogatories were received with no inconsiderable dismay by the clergy. They took great offence that their forms of ecclesiastical polity, which they considered irreversibly fixed by Act of Parliament, and founded, as they contended, on the Word of God, which had been so highly eulogized also

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 435, 436.

by the King in 1592, should be called in question. They saw how acutely the questions had been drawn up; how deeply they touched the independence of the Kirk; what a total revolution and alienation the late excesses of the ministers had occasioned in the mind of the sovereign, and how earnest and determined he seemed in the whole matter.

All this demanded instant vigilance and resistance. Many private conferences were held; and in the end of February the brethren of the Synod of Fife convened at St Andrews; where, after "tossing of the King's questions for sundry days," they drew up their replies, which, as was to be expected, ruled everything in favour of the Kirk, and resisted every claim on the part of the King. Some of these answers are remarkable, and seem to show that the principles then laid down were incompatible with the existence of civil government. Thus, the first question, Whether matters concerning the external government of the Kirk might not be debated *salvâ fide et religione?* was met by a peremptory negative; on the second, they were equally positive that the King had no voice in the discussion or establishment of any acts relating to Church government. All the Acts of the Kirk (so was their response worded) ought to be established by the Word of God. Of this Word the ordinary interpreters were the pastors and doctors of the Kirk; the extraordinary expounders, such as were called for in times of corruption, were the prophets, or such men as were endowed by God with extraordinary gifts; and kings and princes had nothing to do but

to ratify and vindicate, by their civil sanctions, that which these pastors and prophets had authoritatively declared.[1] As to the indecent and scurrilous practice of inveighing against particular men and councillors by name in the pulpit, they defended its adoption by what they termed apostolic authority. "The canon," said they, "of the Apostle is clear: 'They that sin publicly, rebuke publicly, that the rest may fear;'" and so much the more if the public sin be in a public person. On other points they were equally clear and decided in favour of their own practices and pretensions. All things, they contended, might be spoken on all texts; and if the minister travelled from his subject, he was only following the express directions of Paul to Timothy. The General Assembly might be convened without the authority of the King, because the officers of the Kirk received their place and warrant directly from Christ, and not from any temporal Prince; and the acts passed in that Assembly were undoubtedly valid, although carried against the royal will. On this question their reasoning was extraordinary: "The King (they contended) should consent to, and give a legal sanction to all acts passed in the Assembly; and why? Because the acts of the Assembly have sufficient authority from Christ; who has promised, that whatever shall be agreed upon on earth by two or three convened in his name, shall be ratified in heaven; a warrant to which no temporal King or Prince can lay claim: and so," it continues, "the acts and constitutions of

[1] Calderwood, pp. 382, 383.

the Kirk are of higher authority than those of any earthly king; yea, they should command and overrule kings, whose greatest honour should be to be members, nursing fathers and servants to this King Christ Jesus, and his House and Queen the Kirk."[1] To pursue the answers is unnecessary, enough having been given to show their general tendency. But the courage of the Synod of Fife, by whom these stout replies were drawn up, did not pervade the whole body of the Kirk; and the King, who managed the affair with his usual acuteness and dexterity, succeeded in procuring a majority in the General Assembly, and ultimately carrying his own views.

This James appears to have effected by holding out hopes of preferment to those who were wavering, and packing the General Assembly with a large majority of north-country ministers, who were generally esteemed more lukewarm Presbyterians and more devoted courtiers than their lowland brethren. Sir Patrick Murray, a gentleman of the bed-chamber, had been sent for this purpose into the North; and was so successful in his mission, that when the Assembly met at Perth, the King found them in a more placable and conciliatory mood than could have been anticipated. It was declared, after some sharp discussion, a lawful Assembly; having power, not only to debate, but to conclude such questions as should be brought before them. The royal Commissioners, Sir John Cockburn, Sir John Preston, and Mr Edward Bruce, then

[1] Calderwood, p. 386.

presented thirteen Articles, which embraced the principal points of dispute already included by the King in his original Queries; and a Committee of the Assembly having been chosen to consider them, they gave in, next morning, a series of answers, which James pronounced unsatisfactory, and requested the members of Assembly to meet the Estates for the purpose of a more full discussion. When they appeared, he observed that they must be well aware of the object for which he had desired their attendance. "My purpose," said he, "in calling you together is to amend such things as are amiss, and to take away the questions that may move trouble afterwards. If you, for your parts, be willing to have matters righted, things may yet go well. I claim nothing but what is due to every Christian King; that is, to be *Custos et Vindex Disciplinæ*. Corruptions are crept in, and more are daily growing, by this liberty that preachers take in the application of their doctrine, and censuring everything that is not to their mind. This I must have amended; for such discourses serve only to move sedition, and raise tumults. Let the Truth of God be taught in the Chair of Truth, and wickedness be reprobated; but in such sort as the offender may be bettered, and vice made more odious. To rail against men in pulpit, and express their names, as we know was done of late, there being no just cause; and to make the Word of God, which is ordained to guide men in the way of salvation, an instrument of sedition; is a sin, I am sure, beyond all other that can be committed on earth Hold you

within your limits, and I will never blame you, nor suffer others to work you any vexation. The civil government is committed to me. It is not your subject; nor are ye to meddle with it."[1]

This peremptory mode of address overawed the Assembly; and after protesting that they had convened in that place only to evince their obedience to the sovereign, and in no wise consenting to submit matters ecclesiastical to a civil judicatory, they withdrew to their ordinary place of meeting, and prepared their amended answers; with which the King declared himself satisfied for the present. And he had good reason to be so; for he had already gained some principal points. It was agreed that the monarch, either by himself or his Commissioners, might propose to the General Assembly any reformation or amendment in ecclesiastical matters connected with the external government of the Kirk; that no unusual conventions should be held amongst pastors without the royal consent; that the acts of the Privy Council, or the laws passed by the three Estates, should not be attacked or discussed in the pulpit, without remedy having been first sought from the King; that in the principal towns of the realm no minister should be chosen without consent of the King, and of the flock; and that no man should be by name rebuked in the pulpit, unless he had fled from justice, or were under sentence of excommunication.[2]

James' next step was to reconcile the Catholic lords to the Kirk; and he was here equally success-

[1] Spottiswood, p. 440.

[2] Id. p. 441.

ful. He had already written a peremptory letter to Huntly, informing him that the time was come when he must either embrace the Protestant faith, remain in Scotland, and be restored to his honours and his estates; or leave his country for ever, if, as the King expressed it in his letter, his conscience were so "*kittle*"[1] as to refuse these conditions; in which case James added, "Look never to be a Scotsman again!" The letter concluded with these solemn words:—

"Deceive not yourself, to think that by lingering of time, your wife and your allies shall ever get you better conditions. I must love myself and my own estate better than all the world; and think not that I will suffer any professing a contrary religion to dwell in this land."[2]

The conditions presented to Huntly, Angus, and Errol, were, that after conference with the Presbyterian ministers, who should be careful to instruct them in the Truth, they should acknowledge the Kirk of Scotland to be a true Church, become members of it, hear the Word, receive the sacraments, and be obedient to its discipline; and that they should banish all Jesuits and seminary priests from their company and estates, and subscribe the Confession of Faith. On the meeting of the General Assembly at Dundee, (10th May, 1597,) the brethren who had

[1] *i. e.*, So ticklish or tender.

[2] Original in the King's hand, Warrender MSS., vol. A., p. 169. Printed by Spottiswood, with some words and sentences omitted.

been appointed for this purpose, reported that the earls had recanted their errors, subscribed the Confession of Faith, and so completely fulfilled all the conditions required of them, that nothing more remained, than the pleasing duty of receiving them once more into communion with the Kirk. But, at the very moment of reconciliation, it was found that Mr James Gordon, a Jesuit, had glided in disguise into the country of Huntly, and was busy in shaking his resolution; whilst a daring Catholic baron, named Barclay of Ladyland, seized and fortified Ailsa, a small island in the shape of a huge, rugged rock, off the coast of Ayr, with the design of delivering it to the Spaniards, who had promised to make a descent in that quarter. This desperate enterprise was defeated by Mr Andrew Knox, minister of Paisley, whose prowess had been shown some five years before this, in seizing George Ker with the Spanish Blanks.[1] With like success, this devoted member of the Kirk having discovered Barclay's plot, girded on his sword; and taking boat, with a few daring assistants, attacked the traitor on his rock, and reduced him to such extremity, that rather than be taken alive he rushed into the sea, and in one moment choked both himself and his treason.[2]

This reverse confirmed the Catholic lords in their convictions; and the ceremony of their reconciliation to the Kirk, and restoration to their

[1] Supra, p. 76-77.

[2] Spottiswood, p. 445. MS. St. P. Off., without date.

estates and honours, took place at Aberdeen in the end of June. As it was an event particularly acceptable to the King, and considered a great triumph by the Kirk, the proceedings were conducted with much solemnity. After a strict Fast, held on Saturday the 25th of June, on which day the three earls, Huntly, Angus, and Errol, made up all deadly quarrels, and shook hands with their enemies, mutually imploring and receiving forgiveness; the congregation assembled on Sunday the 26th, in the old Kirk at Aberdeen, which was crowded with the noblemen, barons, and common people. In the main aisle was a table for the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and immediately before the sermon, the three earls rose from their places, and subscribed the Confession of Faith. The sermon followed, preached by Mr John Gledstanes; after which the earls rose, and with a loud voice made open confession of their late defection and apostacy, professing their present conviction of the truth of the Presbyterian faith, and their resolution to remain steadfast in the same. Huntly then declared before God, his majesty, and the Kirk, his deep penitence for the murder of the Earl of Murray; after which the three noble delinquents were absolved from the sentence of excommunication, and received by the ministers, the royal Commissioner, and the provost and magistrates, into the bosom of the Kirk. A person in the dress of a penitent now threw himself on his knees before the pulpit: it was the Laird of Gicht, who implored pardon for his supporting Bothwell, and entreated

to be released from his sentence of excommunication. All this was granted, The repentant earls then received the sacrament after the Presbyterian form; solemnly swore to keep good order in their wide and wild territories, executing justice, destroying "bangsters," and showing themselves, in all respects, "good justiciars;" and, on the succeeding day, Marchmont Herald proclaimed their reconciliation by sound of trumpet at the Cross, which was hung with tapestry, and surrounded by multitudes, who shouted their joy, drank their healths, and tossed their glasses in the air.[1]

This success gave strength to the King's government, and encouraged James to go forward with his great ecclesiastical project; but he proceeded with caution, and took care not to alarm the Kirk by prematurely disclosing the full extent of his reforms. He had now secured in his interest a large party of the ministers; but the elements of democracy, and the hatred of anything approaching to a hierarchy, were still deeply rooted in the General Assembly, and in the hearts of the people. Mr Andrew Melvil, Principal of the College of St Andrews, a man singularly learned, ready in debate, sarcastic, audacious, and overbearing, led the popular party, with his nephew, James Melvil, who was warmly attached to the same principles, but of a gentler spirit. Many others assisted them; and the King, anxious to get rid of their opposition, proposed that,

[1] Thomas Mollison to Mr Robert Paip, Aberdeen, 28th June, 1597. Analecta Scotica, p. 299.

instead of the whole Assembly continuing its proceedings, a General Commission should be granted to some of the wisest amongst the brethren, who might consult and coöperate with the monarch upon various matters of weight which concerned "not only particular flocks, but the whole estate and body of the Kirk."[1] This was agreed to. Fourteen ministers were chosen, most of whom were known to be favourable to the views of the Court; and these, whom Calderwood the popular historian of the Kirk stigmatizes as the "*King's led horse*," convened soon after at Falkland, where they summoned before them the Presbytery of St Andrews, and gave a specimen of their new power, by reversing a judgment pronounced by the Presbytery of St Andrews, and removing from their charge two ministers named Wallace and Black, who had profaned their pulpits by personal attack and vituperation. This was followed by a strict and searching visitation of the University of St Andrews, the stronghold of its Rector, Mr Andrew Melvil; who in his office of Principal had, as the King conceived, been too busy in disseminating amongst the students his favourite principles of ministerial parity and popular power. A new Rector was elected; a certain mode of teaching prescribed to the several professors; and a more strict economy introduced into the disposal of the rents of the University, by the appointment of a financial council.

During the summer and autumn, James was busily occupied with the trial of witches, and an expedition

[1] Calderwood, p. 409.

to the Borders; in which last he acted with great energy. Fourteen of the most notorious offenders were taken and hanged; thirty-six of the principal barons, who had encouraged their outrages, seized and brought prisoners to the capital; and Lord Ochiltree left as Lieutenant and Warden over the disturbed districts. Parliament now assembled, and opened with some proceedings on the part of the King, which showed an alienation from England. In an oration to his nobility, he dwelt on the wrongs he had received in the execution of his mother; the interruption in the payment of his gratuity; the scornful answers returned to his temperate remonstrance; the unjust imputations of Elizabeth, who accused him of exciting Poland and Denmark against her, and fostering rebellion in Ireland. But what had most deeply offended him, was the attempt made recently in the English Parliament to defeat his title to the throne of that kingdom; a subject upon which, owing to the daily reports of the shattered health of the Queen, he had become more keenly sensitive than ever.[1] Against all this it was evident he now resolved to be timely on his guard; but, in the meantime, his mind was full of that great plan which had so long occupied it: the establishment of the order of Bishops. For this all was now ripe; and when the Commissioners of the Kirk laid their petition before Parliament, one of its requisitions was found to be as follows: "That the ministers, as representing the Church and

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., George Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, 15th December, 1597.

third Estate of the Kingdom, might be admitted to have a voice in Parliament."

It was at once seen that under this application, which had been so artfully managed to come not from the King but the Kirk, the first step was made for restoring the order of bishops. The monarch, indeed, did not now deny it. He knew that he had a majority in the Assembly, and looked for an easy victory; but something of the ancient courage and fervour of Presbyterianism remained. Ferguson, now venerable from his age and experience, lifted up his testimony against the project for bringing his brethren into Parliament. It was, he affirmed, a Court stratagem; and if they suffered it to succeed, would be as fatal, from what it carried within its bowels, as the horse to the unhappy Trojans. Let the words, said he, of the Dardan prophetess ring in your ears, "*Equo ne credite, Teucri!*" Andrew Melvil, whom the Court party had in vain attempted to exclude, argued against the petition, in his wonted rapid and powerful style; and John Davison, tearing away from the King's speech, and the arguments of his adherents, the thin veil with which their ultimate design was covered, pointed, in a strain of witty and biting irony, to the future bench of bishops, and their Primate at their head. "Busk him, busk him," said he, "as bonnilie as ye can, and fetch him in as fairly as ye will—we ken him weel eneuch; we see the horns of his mitre."[1] But these were insulated efforts; and

[1] Calderwood, p. 415. Busk, dress; bonnilie, prettily; ken, know; eneuch, enough.

had so little effect, that the King, without difficulty, procured an act to be passed, which declared, "That such pastors and ministers as the Crown provided to the place and dignity of a Bishop, Abbot, or other prelate, should have voice in Parliament as freely as any other ecclesiastical prelate had in any former age.[1]

A General Assembly was soon after convened, in which the subject was solemnly argued in the King's presence, first by a committee of brethren, and afterwards by the whole Church.[2] As a preparation for this, James had tried every method of conciliation. He had extended his forgiveness to the ministers of Edinburgh for their part in the late tumult: he had restored their privileges, and the comfort of his royal presence and pardon, to the magistrates and the citizens of the capital; not, however, without having first imposed on them a heavy fine. To those stern and courageous supporters of the Presbyterian Establishment, whose presence he dreaded, other methods were used. Mr Andrew Melvil, who pleaded a right to be present in the Assembly, as he had a "Doctoral charge in the Kirk," was commanded, under pain of treason, to leave the city; others, whose subserviency was doubtful, were wearied out and induced to retire by lengthened preliminary discussions; and at last the King opened his great project in a studied harangue. He dwelt on his constant care to adorn and favour the Kirk, to remove controversies, restore discipline, and increase its patrimony. All, he said, was in a fair road to success; but in order to ensure

[1] Spottiswood, p. 450. [2] 7th March, 1597.

it and perfect the reform, it was absolutely requisite that ministers should have a vote in parliament: without which, the Kirk could not be saved from falling into poverty and contempt. "I mean not," said he, emphatically, "to bring in Papistical or Anglican bishops, but only that the best and wisest of the ministry should be selected by your Assembly to have a place in Council and Parliament, to sit upon their own affairs, and not to stand always at the door like poor supplicants, utterly despised and disregarded."[1] A keen argument followed. Mr James Melvil, Davison, Bruce, Carmichael, and Aird, all devoted and talented ministers, spoke against the project, and denounced it in the strongest language. On the other side the brunt of the battle, in its defence, fell on Gledstanes, and the King himself, no mean adept in ecclesiastical polemics; but, if we may believe Calderwood, the main element of success was the presence of the northern brethren; whom this historian describes as a sad subservient rabble, led by Mr Gilbert Bodie, "a drunken Orkney ass," whose name described their character: all being for the body, with small regard to the spirit.[2] In the end the question was carried by a majority of ten: the Assembly finding that it was expedient for the good of the Kirk that the ministers, as the third Estate of the realm, should have a vote in Parliament; that the same number, being fifty-one or thereby, should be chosen, as were wont of old in time of the Papistical Kirk, to be bishops, abbots, and priors; and that their election

[1] Calderwood, p. 418. [2] Id. p. 419.

should belong partly to the King and partly to the Kirk.[1]

This resolution was adopted in March 1597-8; but the final establishment of Episcopacy did not take place till more than a twelvemonth after this, in a General Assembly convoked at Montrose on the 28th March, 1600. On that occasion, it was decided that the King should choose each bishop, for every place that was to be filled, out of a leet or body of six, selected by the Kirk. Various caveats, or conditions, were added, to secure the Kirk against any abuse of their powers by these new dignitaries. They were to propound nothing in Parliament, in name of the Kirk, without its special warrant and direction. They were, at every General Assembly, to give an account of the manner in which they had executed their commission; they were to be contented with such part of their benefices as the King had assigned for their living; to eschew dilapidation; to attend faithfully on their individual flocks; to claim no higher power than the rest of their brethren in matters of discipline, visitation, and other points of ecclesiastical government; and lastly, to be as obedient to authority, and amenable to censure in all Presbyteries and Provincial or General Assemblies, as the humblest minister of the Kirk.[2] As to the names of these new dignitaries, the word Bishop was apparently so odious and repugnant to the people that the King did not deem it prudent to insist on its adoption; and the brethren unanimously advised that they should not be called bishops, but Commis-

[1] Calderwood, pp. 420, 421. [2] Ibid., p. 441.

sioners. James was too well satisfied with the reality of his success in carrying his great scheme to so prosperous an issue, to cavil at this shadow of opposition; and the subject was handed over to the next General Assembly. The feelings with which this triumph of prelatical principles was regarded by the sincere and stern adherents of puritanism and parity, will be best understood by this brief extract from the work of one of its ablest advocates, the historian Calderwood: "Thus," says he, "the Trojan horse, the Episcopacy, was brought in, covered with *caveats*, that the danger might not be seen; which, notwithstanding, was seen of many, and opponed unto; considering it to be better to hold thieves at the door, than to have an eye unto them in the house that they steal not: and, indeed, the event declared that their fear was not without just cause: for those Commissioners voters in Parliament, afterwards bishops, did violate their *caveats* as easily as Samp-son did the cords wherewith he was bound."[1]

[1] Calderwood, p. 441.

CHAP. V.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1597-8—1600.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Pope.*
Elizabeth.	Henry IV.	Rudolph II.	Philip II. Philip III.	Philip II. Philip III.	Clement VII.

HAVING thus continuously traced the establishment in Scotland of this limited Episcopacy, we must look back for a moment on the civil history of the country. This was not marked by any great or striking events. There was no external war, and no internal rebellion or commotion; and the success which had attended all the late measures of the King produced a tranquillity in the country, which had the best effects on its general prosperity. James had triumphed over the extreme license and democratic movements of the Kirk; had restrained the personal attacks of its pulpit; defined, with something of precision, the limits between the civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions; evinced an anxiety to raise the character and usefulness of the clergy, by granting them a fixed provision; and added consideration and dignity to the Presbyterian polity, by giving it a representation

in the great Council of the country. He had, on the other hand, shown equal wisdom and determination in his conduct to the Roman Catholic earls. None could say that he had acted a lukewarm part to religion. These nobles remained in the country, and had been restored to their estates and honours solely because they were reconciled to the Church. According to the better principles of our own times, he had acted with extraordinary severity and intolerance; but even the highest and hottest Puritan of these unhappy days could not justly accuse him of indifference. He had, moreover, strengthened his aristocracy by healing its wounds, removing or binding up the feuds which tore it, and restoring to it three of its greatest members, Huntly, Angus, and Errol. He had punished, with exemplary severity, the tumult which had been excited in his capital, and read a lesson of obedience to the magistrates and middle orders, which they were not likely to forget. Lastly, he had, in a personal expedition, reduced his Borders to tranquillity; and in his intercourse with England, had shown that, whilst he was determined to preserve peace, he was equally resolved to maintain his independence, and to check that spirit of restless intrigue and interference in which the English Ambassadors at the Scottish Court had, for so many years, indulged with blameable impunity. Sir Robert Bowes, who had long filled that difficult and dangerous office, had recently died at Berwick, a victim apparently to its anxieties; and having undergone, during his devoted services, the same trials of penury and neglect which, with

scarcely one exception, seem to have been the portion of his royal mistress' Ambassadors and diplomatic agents.[1] On the 11th of May he had written to his sovereign, imploring his recall, and lamenting that his decay in health, and weakness in body and estate, unfitted him for farther labour; but his remonstrance was ineffectual: and it was not till nearly six months after, that an order arrived, permitting him to retire, and naming Sir William Bowes as his successor. The release, however, came too late. He was then unable to stand from weakness; and he only reached Berwick to expire.[2] The duties of his office, in the meantime, devolved upon Mr George Nicolson, his secretary, a man of ability, whose letters contain much that is valuable in the history of the times.

On the arrival of Sir William Bowes at the Scot-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir Robert Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 11th May, 1597.

In the last letter but one which Sir Robert Bowes addressed to Cecil from Edinburgh, there is this pathetic passage:—"Her Majesty's gracious compassion taken of me, and of my weakness, is great comfort unto me in my present distress, wherein I now lie, at the seat of God's mercy, and at the point of life, death, sickness, or recovery; in which, as I shall fare, you shall be shortly advertised. For albeit I had intended this day to have entered my journey towards Berwick; yet, by the advice of my friends, and in respect of my weakness disabling me to stand without help, I have agreed to defer this journey until to-morrow." MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir R. Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 31st October, 1597.

[2] His last letter is written from Berwick to Sir R. Cecil on the 6th of November, 1597. He died on the 16th of the same month. In the St. P. Office is preserved a fly-leaf, with a printed epitaph on Sir R. Bowes, by Mr William Fowler, Secretary to Queen Anne of Denmark.

tish Court, he found the King's mind entirely occupied by one great subject—his title to the English throne after the death of the Queen. On this point the tranquillity from other cares now gave James full leisure for thought; and he evinced an extreme sensitiveness in everything connected with it. Reports of speeches against his right of succession in the English Parliament; books written in favour of the claim of the Infanta; intrigues of pretenders at home; the jealousy with which the Catholics regarded his reconciliation with the Kirk; the suspicion with which the Kirk observed his favour to the Catholics: all these thorny matters perpetually haunted and harassed him. From his observations, the Ambassador dreaded that the royal mind was beginning to be alienated from England; and in his first interview James certainly expressed himself with some bitterness against Elizabeth. The expostulations addressed to him by his good sister, he said, were unnecessarily sharp. She accused him of diminished friendliness, of foreign predilections, of credulity and forwardness; but he must retort these epithets, for he had found herself too ready to believe what was untrue, and to condemn him unheard. It was true that, when he saw other competitors for the Crown of England endeavouring, in every way, to advance their own titles, and even making personal applications to the Queen, he had begun to think it time to look to his just claim, and to interest his friends in his behalf. It was with this view he had required assistance from his people to furnish Ambassadors to various foreign

powers. This, surely, he was entitled to do; but anything which had been reported of him beyond this was false: and his desire to entertain all kindly offices with his good sister of England continued as strong as it had been during his whole life.[1] Elizabeth, however, was not satisfied: she still suspected that the Scottish Court was inimical to England; and these suspicions were increased by the letters of Nicolson her agent. James was said to be much guided by the opinions of Elphinstone, Secretary of State, who was little attached to English interests. There was the warmest friendship between the Scottish Queen, Anne of Denmark, and the Countess of Huntly, a devoted Catholic. They often slept in the same bed; and this favoured lady, as Nicolson quaintly expressed it, had the "plurality of her Majesty's kisses."[2] The two young Princesses were intrusted to Lady Livingston, a Catholic; many things, in short, concurred to show, that although appearances were preserved that the King might not forfeit his English "gratuity," cordiality was at end. At this moment a strange circumstance occurred, which exasperated the feelings of both monarchs. A miscreant, named Valentine Thomas, accused James of employing him in a plot against the life of Elizabeth; and it was at first whispered, and afterwards more plainly asserted at the Scottish Court, that the Queen, though she did not choose to speak openly, believed the accusa-

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir William Bowes to Sir R. Cecil, 1st February, 1597-8.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Occurrences, 2d February, 1597-8.

tion. Some dark expressions which she used in a letter to the King seemed to countenance this idea; and it was certain that she had employed Sir Edward Coke, Sir Francis Bacon, and other judges, in the investigation. James resented this, and insisted on explanations. It was needless in him, he said, to disclaim "such vile intended murder;" but he demanded the fullest investigation, and the severest punishment of the wretch who had so foully slandered him. He would proclaim it as false to all the world by sound of trumpet, by open challenge, in any number; yea, of a King to a King! When his late Ambassador to England attempted to pacify him, he struck him on the breast, and said he was sure there was a chain of Elizabeth's under his doublet. It was in vain that, to appease him, the Queen of England wrote a letter with her own hand, in which she assured him, that she was not "of so viperous a nature" as to harbour a thought against him; and that the deviser of such abominable slander should have his deserts.[1] Even this was not enough. The accusation had been public; the depositions of the villain remained uncancelled; who could say what use might not be made of them against his future rights, and to prejudice him in the hearts of the English people? Here was the sore point; and James did not cease to remonstrate till he had extorted from the Queen a solemn and formal refutation of the whole story.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 11th May, 1598, Nicolson to Burghley. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, 1st July, 1598.

The subject of his title, indeed, had kept the monarch, for the last three years, in a state of perpetual and irritable activity. He encouraged authors to write upon the question; and jurisconsults, heralds, and genealogists, made their harvest of his anxiety. Monsieur Jessè,a French literary adventurer, who in 1596 visited the Scottish Court, was made Historiographe au Roi d'Escosse, and commanded to "*blaw abroad*" Secretary Elphinstone's discourse on his majesty's title. Walter Quin, an Irish poet and scholar, drew up a work in Latin on the same subject. Monsieur Damon, another Frenchman, corrected it and the King sent the manuscript to Waldegrave, his printer, who, in an agony, declared to Nicolson, that he must either print it, and irrecoverably offend his gracious sovereign Queen Elizabeth, or refuse, at the peril of his life. Nor was this all; James was suddenly seized with the most sensitive feelings on the subject of his royal mother's memory. His claims came through her; and slander on the Queen of Scots might taint the transmitted title. Spenser, as it was asserted, had glanced at her under the character of Duessa in his Fairy Queen; and the Scottish Secretary of State insisted that *Edward* Spenser, (the diplomatist did not even know the immortal poet's name,) should be severely punished. Quin, too, came to the rescue, and wrote an answer to Spenser; whilst "Dickson," an English pedagogue, who taught the Art of Memory, forsook his *ferula*, and found in Scotland a more profitable employment

in answering the famous Treatise of Doleman, or rather Father Parsons, from materials furnished by the King himself.[1]

These constant cares were only interrupted by the alarming increase of witches and sorcerers, who were said to be swarming in thousands in the kingdom; and for a moment all other cares were forgotten in the intensity with which the monarch threw himself once more into his favourite subject. But a shocking discovery put an end to this dreadful inquisition. An unhappy creature, named Aitken, was seized on suspicion, put to torture, and in her agony confessed herself guilty, named some associates, and offered to purge the country of the whole crew, if she were promised her life. It was granted her; and she declared that she knew witches at once by a secret mark in their eyes, which could not possibly be mistaken. The tale was swallowed. She was carried for months from town to town throughout the country, and in this diabolical circuit accused many innocent women, who, on little more than the evidence of a look, were tried and burnt. At last suspicion was roused. A woman, whom she had convicted of having the devil's eye-mark, was disguised, and, after an interval, again brought before her; she acquitted her. The experiment was repeated with like success; and the miserable creature, falling on her knees, confessed that torture had made her a

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 25th Feb., 1597-8. MS. Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, Balcarres Papers, vol. vii. pp. 26, 29, The King to the Secretary.

liar, both against herself and others. This, as it well might, brought the royal inquisitionist of sorcery, and his civil and ecclesiastical assistants, to their senses. The Commission of Inquiry was recalled, and all proceedings against the witches discharged till the Parliament should have determined the form and evidence to be adopted in their trial.[1]

Everything was now tranquil in the southern part of the kingdom; and the whole Estate, to use Nicolson's expression to Cecil, so "marvellous quiet,"[2] that the King had leisure to attend to an important and long neglected subject: the condition of the Highlands and Isles. It had, for some time, been James' intention to visit these remote districts in person, and, as usual, to overawe them by the terror of the royal name, backed by an army and a fleet; but year after year had passed, and nothing was done. His impoverished finances, his quarrel with the Kirk, his entanglements with the Papist earls, his embassies to foreign Courts on the subject of his title,—all these engrossed his attention; and the fragments of leisure which remained were filled up by the witches, and a visit made to Scotland by the Duke of Holstein, the brother of his Queen, which seems to have thrown the Court into a perpetual whirl of pageantry, intoxication, and masquerade. The people, according to Nicolson, groaned at the expense; and his majesty was much

[1] Spottiswood, p. 448, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Cecil, 15th Aug., 1597. Same to same, 5th Sept., 1597.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, 20th Nov., 1598.

distempered both in his privy purse and his digestion.[1] But these revels and potations had at last an end. The joyous Dane took leave; and the royal mind, relapsing into sobriety, turned to the Isles and Donald Gorm Macdonald. This potent Highland chieftain had recently made advances to Elizabeth; and it is not uninteresting to remark the stateliness with which a prince amongst the northern *vikingr* approached the English Semiramis. He styled himself Lord of the Isles of Scotland, and Chief of the Clandonnel Irishmen; and after a proud enumeration of the petty island princes and chiefs who were ready to follow him in all his enterprises, he offered, upon certain "*reasonable motives and considerations*," to embrace the service of the Queen of England, and persuade the Isles to throw off all allegiance to the Scottish Crown. He and his associates were ready, they declared, on a brief warning, to stir up rebellion throughout all the bounds of the mainland, to "*fasche*"[2] his majesty, and weary the whole Estates; to create a necessity for new taxation, and thus disgust all classes of his subjects. To induce Elizabeth to embrace these proposals, Donald informed the Queen, that he knew the secret history of the Scottish King's intercourse with her arch-rebel Tyrone, and could lay before her the whole intrigues of the Catholic earls lately reconciled to the Kirk, but "meaning nothing less in their hearts than that which they showed outwardly to the world." He would disclose, also, he said, the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 9th June, 1598.
[2] Trouble.

secret history of the Spanish practices in Scotland; and prove with what activity the northern Jesuits and seminary priests had been weaving their meshes, and pushing forward "their diabolical, pestiferous, and antichristian courses;" which he, Donald Gorm Macdonald, protested before God and his angels he detested with his whole soul. All this he was ready to do, upon "good deservings, and honest courtesies," to be offered him by the Queen of England; to whose presence he promised to repair upon a moment's warning.[1]

What answer was given by the English Queen to these generous and disinterested proposals does not appear; although the letter of Donald Gorm, who made it, is marked in many places by Burghley with the trembling hand of sickness and old age. It is probable, that under the term "*honest courtesies*," more substantial rewards were found to be meant than Elizabeth was willing to bestow; and that the perpetual feuds, massacres, and conspiracies which occurred amongst these Highland chiefs and their followers, disgusted this Princess, and shook her confidence in any treaties or alliances proposed by such savage auxiliaries. It was in one of these barbarous plots that Maclean of Duart, a firm friend of Elizabeth, with whose warlike exploits we are already acquainted, met his death;[2] being treacher-

[1] MS. St. P. Off., indorsed by Burghley "Donald Gormo Macdonald," March, 1598.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Sir R. Cecil, 10th Aug., 1598. Supra, p. 170.

ously slain in Isla, by his nephew, Sir James Macdonald, who persuaded him to visit the island; alleging, as a pretext, his desire to make an amicable settlement of their differences. So little did the brave Lord of Duart suspect any foul play, that he came to the meeting without armour, in a silk dress, and with only a rapier at his side. Along with him were his second son, and the best of his kin, in their holiday garb, and with little other arms than their hunting-knives and boar-spears: but although set upon by an ambush of nearly seven hundred men, they made a desperate defence. Maclean, a man of herculean strength, slew three of the Macdonalds at the first onset. When he saw there was no hope, he commanded his son, who fought beside him, to fly, and live to avenge him;[1] but the chief himself, and a little knot of his clansmen, stood, shoulder to shoulder, and were not cut down till after fifty of their assailants had fallen.

The death of this great chief was little resented by the King: for James had long been jealous of his dealings with Elizabeth, and his bitter hostility to Huntly; whilst, at this moment, Sir James Macdonald of Dunluce, his murderer, was in high favour at the Scottish Court.[2] This Macdonald, known in Irish history as James Macsorlie, had been long a thorn in the side of England, stirring up rebellion in Ireland, and offering his services to James as an

[1] The present Earl Compton, eldest son of the Marquess Northampton, is descended, through his mother the late amiable and accomplished Lady Compton, from this second son.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 10th Aug., 1598.

active partisan both in Spanish and Scottish affairs. Macsorlie seems to have been a perfect specimen of those Scoto-Hebridean barons who so often concealed the ferocity of the Highland freebooter under the polished exterior which they had acquired by an occasional residence in the low country. It was his pleasure sometimes to join the Court at Falkland or Holyrood, mingle in its festivities, give rich presents to the Queen and her ladies, outshine the gayest, and fascinate all observers by the splendour of his tastes and the elegance of his manners;[1] but suddenly would come a message from some Highland ally, and Macsorlie flew back to his native islands, where, the moment his foot touched the heather, the gay courtier became a rampant and blood-bolstered savage. Macsorlie had, for years, been the ally of Tyrone, and the soul of the resistance in Ireland; and Elizabeth resented the favour shown him by James; who replied, "That if his convicted traitors, Bothwell and Colvil, walked the streets of her capital, he was as free to entertain an island chief who owed her no allegiance, and whose assistance was useful to him in reducing the remote Highland districts which had insolently assumed independence."[2]

So dreadful, indeed, was now the state of those portions of his dominions, that, to prevent an utter dissevering from the Scottish Crown, something must be done; and many were the projects suggested. At one time the King resolved to proceed

[1] Analecta Scotica, p. 105, Sir John Skene to the Lord Secretary.
[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 16th August, 1598.

to the disturbed districts in person, and fix his head-quarters in Kentire; at another, a Deputy was to be sent, armed with regal powers; and twice the Duke of Lennox was nominated to this arduous office.[1] The old plan, too, might have been repeated, of granting a royal Commission to one or other of the northern *Reguli*, who were ever prepared, under the plea of loyalty, to strengthen their own hands, and exterminate their brethren; but this, as had been often felt before, was to abandon the country to utter devastation; and a more pacific and singular policy was now adopted. An association of Lowland barons, chiefly from Fife, took a lease from the Crown of the Isle of Lewis, for which they agreed, after seven years' possession, to give the King an annual rent of one hundred and forty chalders of victual, and came under an obligation to *conquer* their farm at their own charges. Another company of noblemen and gentlemen in Lothian offered, under a similar agreement, to subdue Skye. And this kind of feudal joint-stock company actually commenced their operations with a force of six hundred soldiers, and a motley multitude of farmers, ploughmen, artificers, and pedlers. But the Celtic population and their haughty chiefs, could not consent to be handed over, in this wholesale fashion, to the tender mercies and agricultural lectures of a set of Saxon adventurers. The Lowland barons arrived, only to be attacked with the utmost fury, and to have the leases of their farms, in the old Douglas phrase, written on their

[1] Gregory, pp. 267, 283.

own skins with steel pens and bloody ink. For a time, however, they continued the struggle; and having entered into alliance with some of the native chiefs, fought the Celts with their own weapons, and more than their own ferocity. Instead of agricultural or pastoral produce, importations of wool, or samples of grain, from the infant colony, there was sent to the Scottish Court a ghastly cargo of twelve human heads in sacks; and it was hoped that, after such an example of severity, matters might succeed better. But the settlers were deceived. After a feeble and protracted struggle of a few years, sickness and famine, perils by land, and perils by water, incessant war, and frequent assassinations, destroyed the colony; and the three great northern chiefs, Macdonald of Sleat, Macleod of Harris, and Mackenzie of Kintail, enjoyed the delight of seeing the principal gentlemen adventurers made captive by Tormod Macleod; who, after extorting from them a renunciation of their titles, and an oath never to return to the Lewis, dismissed them to carry to the Scottish Court the melancholy reflection, that a Celtic population, and the islands over which it was scattered, were not yet the materials or the field for the operations of the economists of Fife and Mid-Lothian.[1]

The King's recent triumph over the ministers; the vigour with which he had brought the bishops into Parliament, and compelled his nobles to renounce their blood-feuds; seem to have persuaded him that

[1] Gregory, p. 290-299. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 1st July, 1598.

his will and prerogative were to bear down all before him; but a slight circumstance now occurred which, had he been accustomed to watch such political indications, might have been full of warning and instruction. The magistrates of Edinburgh had arrested an offender: he was rescued by one of the servants of the King. The magistrates prosecuted the rescuer, and compelled him to give assurance that he would deliver the original culprit; but the courtier failed in his promise, and the civic authorities seized him and sent him to prison. An outcry arose. It was deemed disgraceful that an officer of the royal household, a gentleman responsible solely to the King, should be clapt up in jail by a set of burghers and bailies. James interfered, and commanded his servant to be set free; but the bailies refused. The monarch sent a more angry message; it was met by a still firmer reply: the Provost and magistrates declared that they were ready to resign their offices into the King's hands; as long, however, as they kept them, they would do their duty. James was much enraged, but cooled and digested the affront.[1]

Within a fortnight after, however, arose a more serious dispute between the Crown and the Court of Session, the Supreme Court of Judicature, in which its President, Sir Alexander Seton, and the majority of the judges, exhibited a spirit of independence which is well worthy of being recorded. The subject of quarrel was a judgment pronounced by the Court in favour of the celebrated minister of the Kirk, Mr

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 27th Feb., 1598-9.

Robert Bruce, who had been deprived of his stipend by the King. Bruce sued the Crown before the Session, and obtained a decision in his favour. The monarch appealed; came to the Court in person; pleaded his own cause with the utmost violence, and commanded the judges to give their vote against Mr Robert. The President Seton then rose: "My liege," said he, "it is my part to speak first in this Court, of which your Highness has made me head. You are our King; we, your subjects, bound and ready to obey you from the heart, and, with all devotion, to serve you with our lives and substance: but this is a matter of law, in which we are sworn to do justice according to our conscience and the statutes of the realm. Your Majesty may, indeed, command us to the contrary; in which case I and every honest man on this bench will either vote according to conscience, or resign and not vote at all." Another of the judges, Lord Newbattle, then rose, and observed, "That it had been spoken in the city, to his Majesty's great slander, and theirs who were his judges, that they dared not do justice to all classes, but were compelled to vote as the King commanded: a foul imputation, to which the lie that day should be given; for they would now deliver a unanimous opinion against the Crown." For this brave and dignified conduct James was unprepared; and he proceeded to reason long and earnestly with the recusants: but persuasions, arguments, taunts, and threats, were unavailing. The judges, with only two dissentient votes, pronounced their decision in favour of Mr

Robert Bruce; and the mortified monarch flung out of Court, as a letter of the day informs us, muttering revenge, and raging marvellously.[1] When the subservient temper of these times is considered, and we remember that Seton, the President, was a Roman Catholic, whilst Bruce, in whose favour he and his brethren decided, was a chief leader of the Presbyterian ministers, it would be unjust to withhold our admiration from a judge and a court which had the courage thus fearlessly to assert the supremacy of the law.

It was during the course of this year, that the Queen of England lost Lord Burghley, who died on the 4th of August, 1598, in his seventy-eighth year; a long tried and affectionate servant to his royal mistress; but of whom, however high his character as an English statesman, no Scottish historian can speak without censure. He had been for nearly forty years the almost exclusive adviser of the English Queen in her Scottish affairs. It was chiefly his advice and exertions that brought the unhappy Mary to the scaffold; and in his policy towards Scotland, he seems almost invariably to have acted upon the principle, that to foster civil dissension in that kingdom, was to give additional strength and security to England. Happily, the time has come when we may pronounce this maxim as unsound as it is dishonest; but, in those days, craft was mistaken for political wisdom: and Sir Robert Cecil, Lord Burghley's second son, who now succeeded to his father's power, had been educated in the same narrow school.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 16th March, 1598-9.

This able man, who filled the office of Secretary of State to Elizabeth, had, as we have seen, for some years taken the chief management of Scottish affairs; and, soon after his father's death, he became deeply alarmed for the orthodoxy of James and his Queen; suspecting them, as appears by a paper in his own hand, of growing every day more devoted in their affection to the Pope.[1] That these were ideal terrors of the English Secretary, the result plainly showed: but the true key to this apparent Papal predilection, was James' extreme poverty; the rigid economy of Elizabeth, who refused to supply his wants; and a hope entertained by the Scottish King, that if he exhibited a disposition to relax in the rigidity of his Protestant principles, and to maintain an amicable intercourse with the Catholics, his exhausted exchequer might be recruited by a supply of Roman and Spanish gold. But Cecil, although he allowed some weight to this, thought it too slight a cause to account for the strong symptoms of declension from the reformed opinions exhibited both by the King and his councillors, and advised his royal mistress instantly to despatch Sir William Bowes into Scotland, whose veteran experience in Scottish politics might, he hoped, bring about a reaction. Want of money might, as Cecil contended, explain somewhat of James' late coldness; but there must be deeper agencies and convictions producing the strange appear-

[1] MS. St. P. Off. Memorial of the present state of Scotland, 1598. Id. Ibid., Nicolson to Cecil, 14th April, 1599.

ances now exhibited by a country which had, within these few years, stood in the van of Protestant kingdoms; which had been the stronghold of Presbyterian purity. It was noted too by Cecil, that Elphinstone, James' principal Secretary of State, was a Catholic; that Seton, the President of the Session, was a Catholic; that Lord Livingston, the governor of the young princesses, was a Catholic; and that Huntly, who, notwithstanding his recent recantation, was strongly suspected of a secret attachment to his ancient faith, possessed the highest influence over the King.[1] Then, James' late embassies to Catholic princes; the favour shown to Gordon the Jesuit; his secret encouragement of Tyrone, the great enemy of England; a late mission of Colonel Semple to Spain; his animosity to the ministers of the Kirk; his introduction of bishops; his correspondence with the Duchess of Feria, and other Catholics; and even his speeches in the open Convention of his three Estates, were all quoted, and not without good reason, as strong proofs of his defection.

The necessities to which the King had reduced himself by his too lavish gifts to his favourites, and the thoughtless extravagance of his household, were indeed deplorable, and produced repeated remonstrances from his Treasurer, Comptroller, and other financial officers. Money, they said, in a homely and passionate memorial, was required for the "entertainment of the King's bairns, gotten and to be begotten;" for the renewing of his Majesty's whole moveables and

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Memorial of the present state of Scotland.

silver work, all worn and consumed; for the repair and fortification of his castles of Edinburgh, Dumbarton, and Blackness; for the keeping up of his palaces, of which Holyrood and Linlithgow were in shameful decay, and in some parts wholly ruinous. Money was required in all departments of the service of the State, and in all districts; without the kingdom and within it; in the south and in the north. There were no funds to pay the resident in England; no funds to procure secret intelligence; none to support the public officers at home; none to furnish the Wardens of the West Marches; none to fit out a lieutenant for the expedition against the Western Isles, where the rebels had taken Dunyveg, and were in great strength.[1] It was in vain for James to look to England. Elizabeth replied by sending him a list of her gratuities, which proved that, from 1592 to 1599, she had given him twenty-six thousand pounds.[2] At Court, the want of money produced strange scenes; and the high offices of State, instead of being sought after as objects of ambition, were shunned as thankless and ruinous to their possessors. The great office of Lord High Treasurer was going a-begging. Blantyre declared he could hold it no longer. Cassillis, a young nobleman who had recently married the rich widow of the Chancellor Thirlstane, a lady who might have been his mother, was prevailed on to accept it; and had taken the oaths, when the gossip of the Court brought to his ears an ominous speech of the

[1] MS. St. P. Off., The King's Extraordinary Charges.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., Her Majesty's Gratuities to the King of Scots.

King, who had been heard to say, that Lady Cassillis' purse should now be opened for her rose nobles. This alarmed the incipient Treasurer into a prompt resignation; but James stormed, ordered his arrest, seized his and his wife's houses, and compelled him to purchase his pardon by a heavy fine.[1] In the end the dangerous gift was accepted by the Master of Elphinstone, brother of the Secretary of State, "a wise, stout man," as Nicolson characterizes him; yet all his wisdom and firmness were unequal to the task of recruiting the public purse; and so utterly impoverished did he find it, that the expenses of the baptism of the young Princess Margaret, which took place at this time, were defrayed out of the private pockets of the Lords of the Bed-chamber.[2]

On Sir William Bowes' arrival in Edinburgh, early in May 1599, he found the ministers of the Kirk in high wrath against the King, and full of the most gloomy views as to the state of the country. James had been recently employing his leisure hours in writing his celebrated Treatise on Government, the *Basilicon Doron*, which he had addressed to his son the Prince of Wales; and having employed Sir James Sempil, one of his gentlemen, to make a transcript, the work was imprudently shown by him to Andrew Melvil; who took offence at some passages.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 10th April, 1599. Id. Ibid., same to same, 14th April, 1599. Id. Ibid., same to same, 9th June, 1599. Spottiswood, p. 454.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 20th April, 1599. Id. Ibid., same to same, 10th April, 1599.

made copies of them, and laying them, without mentioning any names, before the Presbytery of St Andrews, accused the anonymous author of having bitterly defamed the Kirk. What the exact passages were which Melvil had transcribed does not appear; but it is certain that the book contained an attack upon the Presbyterian form of Church Government, and that the Prince was instructed to hold none for his friends but such as had been faithful to the late Queen of Scots. It was very clear, (so the ministers argued,) that no person entertaining such sentiments as were openly expressed in this work, could endure for any long time the wholesome discipline of the Kirk; and that the severe and sweeping censure pronounced upon the Scottish Reformation as the offspring of popular tumult and rebellion, very plainly indicated the author's leaning to Prelacy and Popery. What was to be expected, said they, from a writer who described the leaders of that glorious work as "fiery and seditious spirits, who delighted to rule as *Tribuni plebis*"; and having found the gust of Government sweet, had brought about the wreck of two Queens; and during a long minority had invariably placed themselves at the head of every faction which weakened and distracted the country? What was to be hoped for if those men, who had been ever the champions of the truth, were to be held up to scorn and avoidance in terms like the following: "Take heed, therefore, my son, to such Puritans, very pests in the Church and commonweal, whom no deserts can oblige, neither oaths nor promises bind; breathing nothing but

sedition and calumnies, aspiring without measure, railing without reason; and making their own imaginations (without any warrant of the Word) the square of their conscience. I protest before the Great God,—and since I am here as upon my testament it is no place for me to lie in,—that ye shall never find with any Highland or Border thieves greater ingratitude, and more lies, and vile perjuries, than with these fanatic spirits."

When the royal Commissioners, Sir Patrick Murray and Sir James Sandilands, attempted to discover the means by which these obnoxious sentences had been presented to the Synod of St Andrews, they were utterly foiled in the attempt; but the offence was at last traced to an obscure minister at Anstruther, named Dykes; who fled, and was denounced rebel. The rumour had now flown through the country that James was the author of the passages, and had given instructions to the Prince, which showed an inveterate enmity to the Kirk; and it was thought that the publication of the whole work would be the likeliest means to silence the clamour. The book accordingly made its appearance; and in Archbishop Spottiswood's opinion,[1] did more for James' title, by the admiration it raised in England for the piety and wisdom of the royal author, than all the Discourses on the Succession which were published at this time. In Scotland the effect, if we believe Sir William Bowes, was the very opposite! It was received by the ministers with a paroxysm of indignation; and soon after the arrival

[1] Spottiswood, p. 456.

of the English Ambassador, the whole Kirk agreed to proclaim a general Fast, to avert, by prayer and humiliation, the judgments so likely to fall on an apostate King and a miserable country. For two entire days the Fast was rigidly observed; and Bowes declared, in his letter to Cecil, that in all his life he had never been witness to a more holy or powerful practice of religion.[1] From the pulpit the ministers proclaimed to the people the chief causes for their call to mourning. A general coldness in God's service had seized, they said, on all ranks; the enemies of the Gospel, who in purer days had been driven into banishment, were now everywhere returning; and almost a third of the realm was deprived of every means for the teaching of the people. The King himself had become the defamer of the Kirk; his children were brought up by an excommunicated Papist; and the young nobility, the hopes of the country, went abroad meanly instructed, and returned either Atheists or Catholics.[2]

A singular event occurred at this time, which led to the recall of Bowes the English Ambassador, and gave high umbrage to the Scottish King. An English gentleman, named Ashfield,[3] had lately come from Berwick, on a visit to the Scottish Court, who, as there is strong reason to believe, was one of those confidential agents whom James had employed in England to give him secret advice and information on the subject of his succession to the English throne,

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Cecil, 25th June, 1599.
[2] Id. Ibid. [3] Afterwards Sir Edmund Ashfield.

after the death of the Queen. Lord Wylloughby, the Governor of Berwick, had himself recommended Ashfield to James' notice; but he had scarcely taken his leave, when Wylloughby discovered that he was a suspicious character, and might do much mischief in Scotland. His alarm became still greater, when he found the attention shown to Ashfield by James; his intimacy with the Catholic party at Court, then in great favour with the King; and the strong suspicion of Bowes the Ambassador, that some treachery against England was contemplated. It was determined to destroy it in the bud, by kidnapping the principal party; and John Guevara, Deputy-warden of the East Marches, Wylloughby's cousin, undertook the commission. Repairing, with only three assistants, to Edinburgh, it was concerted with Bowes, that the Ambassador's coach should be waiting on Leith sands, and that Ashfield, under pretence of taking a pleasure drive, should be inveigled into it, and carried off. All succeeded to a wish. Ashfield, as he took his exercise on the sands with some gentlemen, amongst whom were young Fernyhirst, Sir Robert Melvil, and Bowes, was met by Guevara and his companions, and easily persuaded, "under colour of old friendship and good fellowship,"[1] to join in a wine party; at which, becoming somewhat merry and confused, he readily fell into the trap, entered the coach, and instead of being driven

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, 15th June, 1599. See, also, B.C., Wylloughby to Cecil, 13th June, 1599.

back to Edinburgh, found himself, to his utter confusion, conveyed rapidly to Berwick, and placed under sudden restraint by Lord Wylloughby. Next morning, Wainman, another of the Governor's servants, arrived with Ashfield's papers, which he and Bowes had seized, and brought intelligence that the Scottish King was in the greatest rage at the indignity offered him; and that the people had surrounded Sir William Bowes' lodging, and threatened his life. It had been discovered that the gentlemen who kidnapped Ashfield were in Wylloughby's service, that the coach belonged to the English Ambassador, and that some intoxicating potion had been put in his wine. James wrote a severe and dignified remonstrance to Wylloughby, in which he demanded to know whether this outrage had been committed under any warrant or order from the English Queen;[1] assuring him that it was a matter which, without speedy reparation, he would not pass over. To this Wylloughby boldly replied, that what had been done was not in consequence of any warrant from the Queen, but in the discharge of his own public duty;[2] whilst Sir William Bowes, who had concerted the whole, when challenged on the subject, made no scruple of asserting, that he had not only no hand in the business, but was utterly ignorant of all about it.[3] So,

[1] St. P. Off., B.C., James VI. to Lord Wylloughby, 14th June, 1599.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to James, original draft, 15th June, 1599.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Wylloughby to Cecil, 15th June, 1599. Also, MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Bowes to Cecil, 16th June

true was Sir Henry Wotton's well-known pun on the character of ambassadors of these days. James' dissatisfaction, however, was so great, and the coldness and distance with which he treated Bowes made his place so irksome, that Elizabeth soon afterwards recalled him.[1]

The arrival of a French Ambassador at this crisis, increased the dissatisfaction of the English Queen and the ministers of the Kirk; who suspected that his mission, although kept secret, was connected with James' intrigues with the Catholics abroad. He was a gentleman of the house of Bethune, a younger brother of the great Sully, and much caressed at the Scottish Court: but what especially alarmed the Kirk, was his having brought a Jesuit along with him, who was frequently closeted with the King; whilst the openness with which Sully was allowed the exercise of his religion, caused the brethren to sigh over the contrast of the present cold and liberal times, with the happy days when it was death to set up the Mass in Scotland. Scarcely had these feelings subsided, and the ministers

1599.—Bowes' activity and connivance is completely proved by Lord Wylloughby's letter of the 15th June, to Cecil. He there says: —"I sent home to Edinburgh, with instructions for his reducing. They made divers overtures to my Lord Ambassador, [this was Bowes.] It pleased him to accept of one, which was to draw him to Leith; there, under colour of a dissolute kindliess and good fellowship, to make him merry with wine; then to persuade him to ride home in a coach, sent out of purpose therein to surprise him, and bring him away; which, as it pleased God, had very good success." The coach was Bowes'.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Bowes to Cecil, 9th July, 1599.

begun to congratulate themselves on the prospect of the speedy departure of Bethune, when their wrath was rekindled by the arrival of Fletcher and Martin, with their company of Comedians; whom James, who delighted in the theatre, had sent for from England. To the strict notions of these divines, profane plays, and the licentious mummeries of the stage, were almost as detestable as the Mass itself. The one was idolatry—the worship of Baal, or the golden calf; the other was profanity—the dancing of Herodias' daughter: and as this had led to Herod's rash oath, and the decapitation of the Baptist, so did these English buffoons recall to their mind the miserable times of the Guisean domination, when the Court was full of revelry and masquerade, and the blood of the saints was shed like water. It was no wonder that, with such feelings, the arrival of this gay troop of players was received with a storm of ecclesiastical wrath, for which the gentlemen of the buskin were little prepared; and their case appeared desperate, when the magistrates of the capital, acting under the influence of the Kirk, prohibited the inhabitants, by a public act, from haunting the theatre. But James was not so easily defeated. Fletcher had been an old favourite; nor was this his first visit to Scotland. He had been there before, in 1594; and on his return to England, had suffered some persecution from his popularity with James; who now called the Provost and his counsellors before him, compelled them to rescind their act, and proclaimed, by sound of trumpet, not only that the comedians should continue

their entertainments, but insisted that, next Sunday, the ministers should inform their flocks that no restraint or censure should be incurred by any of his good subjects who chose to recreate themselves by "the said comedies and plays." "Considering," so runs the royal act, "that we are not of purpose, nor intention, to authorize or command anything quhilk[1] is profane, or may carry any offence."[2]

The King's mind had long run intently on the subject of the succession; and he now adopted a measure which, so far as Elizabeth was concerned, was calculated rather to injure than advance his title. A general Band or Contract was drawn up, "purporting to be made by the good subjects of the King's Majesty, for the preservation of his person and the pursuit of his undoubted right to the crown of England and Ireland."[3] The whole matter, during its preparation, was kept secret, and James trusted that no whisper would reach the ears of his good sister Elizabeth. But he was disappointed; for Nicolson, on the 27th November, 1599, thus mentioned it to Cecil. "I hear, which I beseech your honour to keep close, that there is a general Band, subscribed by many, and to be subscribed by all earls, lords, and barons; binding them, by solemn vow and oath, to serve the King with their lives, friends, heritages, goods, and gear; and to be ready, in warlike furniture, for the same on all occa-

[1] Quhilk; which.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 12th November, 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

[3] MS. St. P. Off., A general Band, voluntarily made by the good subjects of the King's Majesty, &c.

sions, but especially for his claim to England."[1] The English Envoy then mentioned, that on the 10th of the succeeding month of December, there was to be held a full Convention of the Estates, in which some solid course was to be adopted to supply the King with money, and provide for the arming of his subjects, to be ready when he might need them. But when the Estates assembled, the result did not justify expectations. The Convention, indeed, was fully attended, and sufficiently loyal in its general feeling; yet when the monarch explained his wants, and sought their advice and assistance, they heard him coldly, and delayed their answer till the next meeting of the Estates. In his harangue, James declared his dislike to any offensive scheme of taxation; proposing, in its place, that a certain sum should be levied on every head of cattle and sheep, throughout the country; but this was utterly refused. He forbore, therefore, to press the point, and contented himself with an appeal to them for that support which all good subjects should give their prince for the vindication of his lawful claims. He was not certain, he said, how soon he should have occasion to use arms; but whenever it should be, he knew his Right, and would venture crown and all for it. Let them take care, therefore, that the country be furnished with armour according to the acts made two years before.[2] This was cheerfully agreed to; and meanwhile the King, whose financial ingenuity seems to have been

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 27th Nov., 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.
[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 15th Dec., 1599, Nicolson to Cecil.

whetted by the gloomy prospect of an empty Exchequer at the time money was becoming every day more needed, drew up another scheme which was submitted to his Estates with as little success as the former. Its object was excellent: being to remove the burden of supplies from the poor commons and labourers of the ground; for which purpose he proposed, that the whole country should be "disposed, as it were, into one thousand persons, and each person to pay a particular sum;" which, all being joined, would make up a total equal to his majesty's necessities.

Against this plan, which had, at least, the merit of simplicity, a formal Protest was presented by the barons and burghs. The Laird of Wemyss in the name of the barons, and John Robertson for the burghs, insisted that they should be specially excepted from any commission given to the Sheriffs, for the levying such a sum, and should continue to "stint [tax] themselves in auld manner;" but as the proposal was hypothetical, and came before the Estates merely as an overture, it was judged enough to meet it by delay; and so anxious was the King to spare his people, and fall in with the wishes of all, that he not only agreed to except the barons and burghs, but to drop the whole scheme if any better should be proposed at the next Convention, which was fixed to be held at Edinburgh, on the 20th of June.[1] It was happy that all ended so amicably; for at the beginning of the Convention he had

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Copy of the Act of the Convention at St Johnston.

exerted himself to carry his purpose by means which were violent and unconstitutional. "To effect this," said Nicolson, in writing to Cecil, "the King drew in the whole Borders, the officers of Estate, Sir Robert Ker, Sir Robert Melvil, and others, contrary to the order there appointed, of six only of every Estate to have voted for the rest."

It was during this Convention held at Edinburgh in December, that the King, with advice of his Secret Council, passed an important act, appointing, in all time coming, the "first day of the year to begin upon the first of January;" and this statute, it was added, should take effect upon the first day of January next to come, which shall be the first day of January, 1600.[1] Previous to this time the Scottish year had begun on the 25th of March; and it is worthy of observation that this still continued the mode of reckoning in England.[2]

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Act for the year of God to begin the 1st of January, yearly.

[2] Sir H. Nicolas's excellent work on the Chronology of History, p. 41.

CHAP. VI.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Pope.*
Elizabeth.	Henry IV.	Rudolph II.	Philip III.	Philip III.	Clement VIII.

In the course of these labours we are now arrived at an extraordinary plot, of which the history, after all the light shed upon it by recent research, is still, in some points, obscure and contradictory. This is the Gowrie Conspiracy. Its author, or, as some have not scrupled to assert, its victim, was the grandson of that Patrick Lord Ruthven, who, as we have seen, acted a chief part in the atrocious murder of Riccio, and died in exile soon after that event.[1] It was the second son of this nobleman, William, fourth Lord Ruthven, who, after sharing the guilt and banishment of his father for his accession to the same plot, was restored by the Regent Morton, and returned to Scotland to engage in new conspiracies. It was his threats, and the menaces of the fierce Lindsay, that were said to have extorted from the miserable captive of Lochleven the demission of her crown. His services were

[1] Supra, vol. vii. p. 35.

rewarded by an earldom; and from the fertile brain and unscrupulous principles of the new earl proceeded the plot for the seizure of the King, known by the name of the Raid of Ruthven. He was pardoned; became again suspected; threw himself into another enterprise against the Government, with Mar and Angus; was detected, found guilty, and suffered on the scaffold. Of his treason there was no doubt; but his conviction, as we have seen,[1] was procured by a disgraceful expedient, which roused the utmost indignation of his friends. This happened in 1584; and, for two years after, the imperious government of Arran directed, or rather compelled, the royal wrath into the severest measures against the house of Ruthven. But the destruction of Arran's power permitted the King's temper, generally gentle and forgiving, to have influence; and, in 1586, the earldom was restored to James, the eldest son of the house, who, dying soon after, transmitted it to John, the third earl, the author of the Gowrie Conspiracy.

Young Gowrie, at the time of his father's execution, could have been scarcely eight years' old;[2] and in the wreck of his house, he, his unhappy mother, and her other children, received an asylum in the North. Here, amidst the savage solitudes of Athol, the country of her son-in-law,[3] the widowed Countess brought up her children, brooded over her wrongs, and taught her sons the story of their father's

[1] Supra, vol. viii. p. 192.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., List of the Scottish Nobility, 1592. In 1592 Gowrie was fifteen years old.

[3] The Earl of Athol had married the sister of Gowrie, MS. St. P. Off.

murder, as his execution was accounted by his party. From such lessons, they seem early to have drunk in that deep passion for revenge, which, in those dark days, was so universally felt, that it may be regarded almost as the pulse of feudal life; a passion which, sometimes at a quicker, sometimes at a slower pace, but yet with strong and abiding force, carried on its victims to the consummation of their purpose. Meanwhile the royal pity had awoke: the family was restored to its honours; and the young earl, having been committed to the care of Rollock the learned Principal of the University of Edinburgh, received an excellent education. But the return for all this, on the part both of his mother and himself, was ingratitude and new intrigues. When, in 1593, Bothwell at Holyrood audaciously broke in upon his sovereign, and for a short season obtained possession of his person, it was the Countesses of Gowrie and Athol, the mother and sister of Gowrie, who were his most active assistants; and in 1594, when the same desperate baron, in conjunction with Athol, Ochiltree, and the Kirk, organized a second plot, the name of the young Earl of Gowrie appeared in the "*Band*" which united the conspirators.[1] He was thus early bred up in intrigue; but the King either did not, or would not, discover his guilt: and Gowrie, having received the royal license to complete his education abroad,[2] passed through England into Italy, studied for five years at the University of Padua, and there is said

[1] See above p. 102, and St. P. Off. MS., Scott. Corr., April, 1594. Band for Protection of Religion, MS.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 22d August, 1594, Sir R. Bowes to Burghley.

to have so highly distinguished himself, that he became Rector of that famous seminary.[1] The young earl was now only one-and-twenty;[2] of an athletic person, and noble presence; excellent in all his exercises; an accomplished swordsman; and so ripe a scholar, that there was scarcely any art or faculty which he had not mastered. Amongst his studies Necromancy, or Natural Magic, was a favourite pursuit; and his tutor, Rhynd, detected him, when at Padua, wearing cabalistic characters concealed upon his person, which were then sometimes used as spells against diabolic, or recipients of angelic influence.[3] He was an enthusiastic chemist; and, in common with many eminent men of that age, a dabbler in judicial astrology, and a believer in the great arcanum. It is curious that this propensity to magic and visionary pursuits was hereditary in the Ruthven family. His grandfather, the murderer of Riccio, had given Queen Mary a magic ring, as a preservative against poison. His father, the leader in the Raid of Ruthven, when in Italy, had his fortunes foretold by a wizard; and the son, when some of his friends had killed an adder in the braes of Strathbran, lamented their haste, and told them he would have diverted them by making it dance to the tune of some cabalistic words which he had learnt in Italy from a great necromancer and divine.

[1] Calderwood, MS. Hist., Brit. Mus., Ayscough, 4739, p. 1386, states this positively: but I have not found his authority.

[2] MS. St. P. Off., drawn up for Cecil in 1592. State of the Scottish nobility.

[3] Rhynd's Declaration in Pitcairn's Crim. Trials, vol. ii. pp. 219, 220.

During his residence at Padua, Gowrie addressed to the King a letter full of gratitude and affection.[1] He kept up, also, a correspondence with his old tutor Rollock; and, in 1595, sent a long epistle to Malcolm, the minister of the kirk at Perth, expressing the most devoted attachment to Presbyterian principles, and written in that strange, pedantic, puritanic style which then characterized the correspondence of the most zealous of that party.[2] The young earl described in this letter, with high exultation and approval, an insane attack made by a fanatical English Protestant upon a Catholic procession, in which he seized the sacred Host, and trampled it under foot; and concluded by expressions of deep regret that his absence from Scotland did not permit him to set forth God's glory in his native country; trusting, as he added, to make up for all this on his return.

This return took place in 1599, through Switzerland; and on arriving at Geneva, he became an inmate for three months in the house of the famous Reformer Beza, who cherished him as the son of a father whom his party regarded as a martyr to the Protestant faith. From Geneva he travelled to Paris, where he was received with high distinction at the French Court, and by Elizabeth's Ambassador, Sir Henry Nevil; who admitted him into his confidence, held private conferences with him "on the alterations feared in Scotland, (to use Nevil's own

[1] Pitcairn's Crim. Trials, vol. ii. p. 330.

[2] It has been printed by Mr Pitcairn, in the second volume of his valuable work, the Criminal Trials, pp. 330, 331.

words,) found him to be exceedingly well affected to the cause of religion, devoted to Elizabeth's service, and, in short, a nobleman of whom, for his good judgment, zeal, and ability, exceeding good use might be made on his return."[1] Bothwell, his old friend and associate, was also at this time in Paris. On leaving France, Gowrie, carrying warm letters of recommendation from Nevil, proceeded to the English Court; where Elizabeth received him with flattering distinction, and kept him for two months; admitting him to her confidence, holding with him great conference[2] on the state of Scotland, which was then threatening and alarming; and it is said by one author, appointing a guard to watch over his safety. It was then no unfrequent occurrence for the incipient intriguer, or conspirator, to be seized or kidnapped by the stratagem of his opponents; and, if true, this circumstance certainly shows how highly the English Queen regarded his safety, and what value she set upon his future services. During this stay in England he became familiar with Sir Robert Cecil, at this moment the most confidential minister of Elizabeth; with the great Lord Wylloughby, one of the honestest and ablest servants of the Queen;[3] and with many others of the leading men about Court.

At the time of Gowrie's arrival in England, (3d

[1] Sir Henry Nevil to Secretary Cecil, 27th Feb., 1599. Winwood's Memorials, vol. i. p. 156.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Sir John Carey to Cecil, 29th May, 1600.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., James Hudson to Cecil, 3d April, 1600. Also, Ibid., B.C., Wylloughby to Cecil, 11th Aug., 1600.

April, 1600,) Elizabeth was deeply incensed with the proceedings of the Scottish King, and his reported intrigues with the Catholics of her own kingdom, and with the Courts of Spain and Rome, on the subject of his title. He had resolved, and made no secret of his resolution, to vindicate his right to the Crown of England by arms, if it were necessary; and he had roused the resentment and alarm of the party of the Kirk to the highest pitch, by the court which he paid to the Catholics, both at home and on the continent. A letter written to Cecil by Colvil, about six months before this, described these intrigues and preparations in strong terms.

Colvil, it must be remembered, was the confidant of the notorious Bothwell, and an old friend and fellow-conspirator of Gowrie's father. It was certain, so said Colvil in this letter, that two envoys had come to the Scottish King from the Pope. They had brought high offers: a promise of a hundred thousand crowns at present, and an engagement to pay down two millions the moment he published liberty of conscience, and declared war with England. Twenty thousand Catholics were said to be ready to join the King the moment he crossed the Border. There was not one Catholic Prince in Europe who would not support his claim; and his Holiness not only regarded him as the most learned and religious Prince of his time, but would willingly follow his advice in restoring to the universal church its purity and discipline.[1]

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Advertisements from Scotland, 18th August, 1599, enclosed in a letter from Colvil, dated 21st Aug., 1599.

In another letter, written some time before this, and dated 17th August, 1599, Colvil speaks to Cecil of the ominous tranquillity of the Scottish Court; which, he says, he had often remarked to be never so quiet as when some "snake-stone was hatching"; adding, "*Quand le Mechant dort, le Diable le berche.*" He assured Cecil, that the King was highly enraged and excited against the party of the Kirk. The ministers were led by Bruce and Andrew Melvil; their ranks included Cassillis, Lindsay, Morton, and Blantyre; and he added, with a significancy which this statesman could be at no loss to understand, that if they received any secret encouragement from England, they were devising to send for Gowrie and Argyll, both of whom were then abroad.[1]

This letter was written towards the end of August, 1599, when Gowrie was probably on his route to England; and in the interval between this and his arrival at the Court of Elizabeth, the estrangement between the Queen of England and the King of Scots had become more embittered. Nicolson, the English Envoy at the Scottish Court, was full of alarm at James' almost open hostility. In one of his letters to Cecil, written in the end of April, 1600, when Gowrie was at the English Court, and, as we have just seen, admitted to the confidence of this minister and his royal mistress, he described the King as indulging in expressions of the utmost discontent and anger on the subject of the intended peace between England and

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Advertisements from Scotland, 18th August, 1599, enclosed in a letter from Colvil, dated 21st Aug., 1599.

Spain. Elizabeth (such were James' words) had long resisted every amicable application made to her on the point of his title; and now he heard one day she was about to marry the Lady Arabella to the brother of the Emperor Mathias; the next, that she had sent for young Beauchamp to Court; the next, that in consequence of her peace with Spain, a priest had openly addressed the Infanta, as the destined restorer of the Catholics in England.[1] Of all this, James added, the Queen refused him any explanation. She treated him with coldness and suspicion; and it became him to look to his just rights, and provide for the future.

Such things were said even openly by the King of Scots; but in the secrecy of his cabinet, James used far stronger language. He there insisted, that before Elizabeth's death, which considering her advanced age and broken health, could not be far distant, he must be ready armed, his exchequer well supplied, and the friends on whom he could place reliance, assembled on the spot with their full strength. To compass all this, he had spared no exertion. England swarmed with his spies; and the "daily creeping in of Englishmen" to the Scottish Court, was a matter which perpetually roused the suspicions of Cecil, and cut his royal mistress to the quick. At this very moment, when Gowrie was in such confidential intercourse with that Princess and her ministers, the Scottish King had received information which made him stand especially on his guard. It was reported that a plot was then being organized

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 24th Dec., 1599.

by the faction in the interest of England, to compel the King into a more pacific policy, and arrest his warlike preparations against that realm;[1] that Colvil, Archibald Douglas, and Douglas the Laird of Spot, all of them old employés of Cecil, were the chief conspirators in England; and that they were casting about to draw home the Earl of Gowrie, then at the Court of Elizabeth, and on whom they reckoned as a great accession to their strength.[2] Bothwell, too, the arch-traitor, whom of all men the King hated and dreaded most, had been at Paris at the same time with Gowrie: their former intimacy rendered it almost impossible they should not have met; and it was now strongly reported, that this desperate man had stolen into Scotland, and had been thrice seen recently in Liddesdale.[3]

Such was the state of parties; such the mutual heart-burning jealousy, intrigues, and preparations between the two sovereigns, when Gowrie, after two months' residence in England, left the Court of Elizabeth and returned to his native country. The facts hitherto given are all capable of proof: their effects upon the character of Gowrie, and how far they influenced or serve to explain his subsequent extraordinary proceedings, can only be conjectural. Yet it appears that they go far to explain something of the mystery which hitherto has surrounded the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 20th April, 1600.
[2] Id. Ibid.
[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Guevara to Lord Wylloughby, 23d April, 1600.

origin of this plot; and that here we have one of those cases where, from the elements on which we form our opinion, conjecture may come indefinitely near to certainty. Gowrie was young: and on youth what must have been worked by the flattery of a Queen, and so great a Queen as Elizabeth! He was ambitious and proud; and when he found that his friends were anxious to place him at the head of the English faction, and in opposition to the hostile projects of the King, was it likely he should decline that pre-eminence? He was a devoted and enthusiastic Puritan, and hated prelacy. Was such a mind likely to refuse the opportunity that now offered, to reëstablish the Presbyterian ascendancy, to reinstate his old friends the ministers on the ground from which they had been driven, and to destroy, if possible, that Catholic faith, which, in his judgment, was idolatrous and damnable? He was animated by a keen desire to revenge his father's death on the monarch who had brought him to the scaffold; and was it probable that when, in the secret conferences which took place with Nevil, Cecil, and Elizabeth, the hostile plans and dangerous intrigues of the King of Scotland were discussed, the Raid of Ruthven should have been forgotten; or that the nefarious project, so repeatedly hazarded, so often crowned with success, to seize the King's person, and administer the government under his pretended sanction, would not present itself? To grasp the supreme power, and have his revenge into the bargain: were such offers unlikely to be held out by so unscrupulous a minister as Cecil? Was

it probable that, if held out, they would be refused by Gowrie? But leaving such speculations, let us proceed.

The young earl arrived in Scotland, after his long absence, about the 20th of May; and some little circumstances accompanied his return, which, after his miserable fate, were remembered and much dwelt on. He entered the capital surrounded by an unusually brilliant cavalcade of noblemen and gentlemen, the friends and dependants of his house, and amid the shouts of immense crowds who welcomed his return. On hearing of it, the King shook his head, and observed, that as many shouted when his father lost his head at Stirling. Whether this was said in the presence of the young earl, is not added by Calderwood, who gives the anecdote; but it was noticed, and we may be pretty sure would reach his ear. When he kissed hands, and took his place in the Court circle, his fine presence, handsome countenance, and graceful manners, struck every one. He soon became a special favourite of the Queen and her ladies, one of whom was his sister, Lady Beatrix Ruthven; and to the King his learning and scholarship made him equally acceptable. He had lived in the society of the most eminent foreign scholars, philosophers, and divines; but he was equally accomplished in all knightly sports, and could discuss the merits of a hawk or hound as enthusiastically as any subject in the circle of the sciences. This was much to James' content; and as the monarch sat at breakfast, he would often keep Gowrie leaning on the back of his chair, and talk to him with that voluble, un-

dignified familiarity which marked the royal conversation. He rallied the young nobleman, also, on his long stay at the English Court; and, as Sir John Carey wrote to Cecil, assailed him with many "fleytes[1] and pretty taunts," on the high honours paid him by Elizabeth, his frequent great conferences with the Queen, her offer to bribe him with gold, and the sumptuousness of his reception and entertainment. He marvelled, too, with good-humoured irony, that his old friends, the ministers of the Kirk, had not ridden out to meet him and form part of his triumphant cavalcade;[2] and, half between joke and earnest, contrived to show him that he had watched all his movements, and was perfectly aware of his confidential intercourse with Nevil, Cecil, and Elizabeth herself.

All this Gowrie took, or seemed to take, in good part.[3] He had certainly, he said, been honourably entertained, and very graciously received by the Queen of England; but this, he believed, was for the King his master's sake; and so he had accepted it. As for gold, he had been offered none: nor did he need it. He had enough of his own.[4] It was in one of those familiar conversations on a strange subject, that an allusion escaped the King, which was afterwards remembered. Queen Anne was at this time great with child, and probably did not take sufficient care

[1] "Fleytes," scolds.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Sir John Carey to Cecil, 29th May, 1600.

[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 2d May, 1600.

[4] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Sir John Carey to Sir R. Cecil, 29th May, 1600.

of herself; but be this as it may, James consulted Gowrie, who had studied at Padua, then the highest medical school in Europe, on the most common causes of miscarriage. He mentioned several, but insisted on fright or sudden terror as the most dangerous; upon which the King, bursting into a fit of loud and scornful laughter, exclaimed, "Had that been true, my Lord, I should never have been sitting here to ask the question. Remember the slaughter of Seignor Davie, wherein thy grandsire was the chief actor:" a reckless, cruel thrust, which the young nobleman must have felt like an adder's sting: for not only his grandfather but his father were present at that bloody deed.[1]

On another occasion, soon after his arrival, a ruffle was nearly taking place in the long gallery at Holyrood, between the servants of Colonel William Stewart and some of the gentlemen of Gowrie's suite. It was this Stewart who had seized his father at Dundee, and dragged him to his trial and death; and all dreaded a bloody encounter. But Gowrie, to their surprise, beat down the weapons of his followers; and giving place with a contemptuous jesture to Stewart, permitted him to walk first into the presence-chamber. On being remonstrated with, his brief and proud reply was a Latin proverb, "*Aquila non captat muscas.*" It is the remark of an old chronicler, that he here covertly alluded to his intended revenge against the King.[2] It is cer-

[1] Calderwood, MS. Hist., Brit. Mus., Sloan, 4739, fol. 1389.

[2] Anonymous MS. Hist. of Scotland, quoted in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii., p. 297.

tain, at least, that it betrayed a determination on Gowrie's part, to fly at the highest quarry.

On his first arrival at Court, about the middle of May 1600, he found the King's mind still concentrated upon that one subject which had so long filled his thoughts, and which he had determined to bring shortly before a Convention of his nobility, barons, and burghs. This was the necessity of making preparation for an event now currently talked of: the death of Elizabeth. To this end James had summoned a Convention of the three Estates to meet on the 20th of June. He had resolved to levy a tax upon the country, to pay his Ambassadors to foreign parts; and to have such a force in readiness as should overawe his enemies, and give confidence to his supporters. On these proposed measures parties were so divided, and such violent storms were apprehended, that the wisest, as Nicolson wrote to Cecil, wished themselves out of the country; and Gowrie, by the advice of his friends, after a brief stay at Court, retired to his own estates, "to be a beholder of the issue of these many suspicions."[1] Soon after this, a violent interview took place between the King and the English resident, Nicolson, in which James complained that Elizabeth had treated him with the utmost haughtiness and want of confidence on the subject of the Spanish peace. She blamed him, he said, for matters of which he was wholly innocent, and showed more kindness to a foreign Duke and the Infanta than to him. It was openly bragged by one of her

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 27th May, 1600.

subjects, that Bothwell was to be let loose, to come in again and brave it. She had seized a parcel of muskets, which he had declared upon his honour had been purchased for the use of his household, as if she dreaded they should be turned against herself.[1] All this, which was daily reported to Elizabeth and Cecil, increased the unfriendly feelings between the two Courts, and convinced the English minister that something decided must be done, to check that bold, and almost hostile attitude in which James seemed now determined to insist upon his rights to the English throne.

At last the important day of the Convention of the three Estates arrived; the nobility, including Gowrie amongst the rest, assembled; the barons and burghs attended; and the King, after having, in many private interviews, endeavoured to gain over the leading men to his own views, brought his proposals before the public meeting of the three Estates, in a studied harangue. To his extreme indignation and astonishment, he failed to convince them of the necessity of taxing themselves to raise the sum he required. The majority of the nobility and the prelates who had been privately canvassed by James, and talked over by the Earl of Mar, were compliant enough; but the barons and the burghs stoutly resisted. The King adjourned the Convention from Monday till Tuesday, employing the interval in threats, entreaties, and remonstrances; but on this day they were as stubborn as before. Another and longer adjournment, and another

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 29th May, 1600.

meeting took place. It not only found them in the same indomitable humour, but some of the higher barons began to waver. The Lord President Seton, in reply to the assertion of the royal claimant, that he must have an army ready on the Queen's death, to maintain his title, argued against the utter folly of attempting to seize that ancient crown by conquest. For such a purpose, he observed, who could say what exact sum might be required? and if the sum were named, who was so insane as to expect that Scotland could raise it? If about to build a palace, they might have a plan and an estimate; if to raise an army of so many thousand men, some certainty might be had of the funds required: but who would venture to fix the sum necessary for the conquest of England? and if fixed, who could be so mad as to believe that the poor country of Scotland could raise it, when it was notorious that sundry towns in England and the Low Countries could advance more money than all Scotland together?[1] Mr Edward Bruce argued for the King's views; and insisted that every true Scotsman, if he regarded the honour of his Prince and country, ought to contribute to the sum now required. Let them not imagine, said he, that a refusal would be unaccompanied with danger. Whoever usurped England after Elizabeth's death would have an eye to Scotland; and if they now suffered their King to be defeated of his right, they might chance to find themselves defeated of their country.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 22d June, 1600. Ibid., same to same, 29th June, 1600.

This argument somewhat softened James, who had started up in a violent passion and accused the President Seton of perverting his meaning. But nothing could move the barons and burghs. They reiterated their plea of poverty; declared, that when the time came, they would furnish their monarch as fair an army as ever good subjects levied for their Prince; and in the meanwhile, instead of forty thousand crowns, would give him forty thousand pounds Scots, on the condition that they should never again be taxed in his time; and that what they did give should go to his own wants, and not to his hungry courtiers. The King spurned at this diminished and conditional offer, and insisted that it should be put to the vote whether it had not been agreed in a former Convention at St Johnston, that a hundred thousand crowns should be advanced him by a thousand persons.

On this new question the young Earl of Gowrie now spoke for the first time; and heading the opposition of the barons and the burghs, exposed the King to the disgrace of a second defeat.[1] He had, he said, been long absent from the country, and had no personal knowledge of what had taken place at St Johnston; but he contended that the present offer of the burghs and barons, to give forty thousand pounds to the King, and their promise to raise money for an army when it was required, was quite as good, nay, almost a better proposal, than that so strongly insisted on by James. Why, then, should his Majesty take such deep umbrage at it? Surely, he continued, it

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 29th June, 1600.

must be evident, that this demand of the King will bring dishonour upon all parties: it is dishonourable for a Prince to ask more than his subjects have to give, and suffer the ignominy of a refusal; it is dishonourable for a people that their poverty should be laid bare to the world, and that all men should see and know they could give so little to their Prince.[1]

This speech of Gowrie, and the daring way in which so young a man threw himself into the ranks of the faction opposed to the King, astonished the Assembly. "Alas!" said Sir David Murray, a courtier, who stood near, "yonder is an unhappy man: his enemies are but seeking an occasion for his death; and now he has given it."[2] But if others wondered, the King, to use an expression of Nicolson's to Cecil, absolutely *raged*, and dismissed the Assembly with a tumultuous burst of fierce and undignified invective; mingling his abuse of the barons and burghs with praises of his nobility, whom he assured of his friendship and favour in all their affairs. "As for you, my masters," he exclaimed, turning with flashing eyes to the burghers, "your matters, too, may chance to come in my way; and, be assured, I shall remember this day, and be even with you. It was I who gave you a vote in Parliament; I who made you a fourth Estate: and it will be well for such as you to remember that I can summon a Parliament at my pleasure, and pull you down as easily as I have built you up.[3] This insulting speech roused one of the oldest of the barons, the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 29th June, 1600.
[2] MS. Calderwood, Ayscough, 4739, fol. 1389.
[3] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 29th June, 1600.

Laird of Easter Wemyss, who boldly told the King that he misconstrued their meaning; and forgot how much he owed them, and what great sums they had given him in his necessities. "We have done your Majesty," said he, "as good offices for *our* Estate; and we, your Majesty's burghs and barons, are as worthy your thanks as the proudest earl, or lord, or prelate here. Our callings may be inferior, but our devotedness is as great; and so your Majesty will find it when the proper time arrives. As for our places in Parliament and Convention, we have bought our seats; we have paid your Majesty for them; and we cannot, with justice, be deprived of them. But the throne is surrounded by flatterers who propagate falsehoods against us: let us be confronted with our accusers, and we engage to prove them liars."[1]

With this haughty defence on the part of the lesser barons and burghs, and with the deepest feelings of displeasure against them and Gowrie, on the part of the King, the Convention separated; and James had to digest, not only the disgrace of a refusal, but the universal satisfaction which, if we may believe Nicolson, it occasioned in the country. He was not diverted from his purpose, however; for, not ten days after, Sir Robert Cecil, who was familiar with all that had taken place at the Convention, was informed by one of his correspondents, that James' preparations against England continued, and that he intended not to tarry till Elizabeth's death. This news was written partly in cipher, on a slip of paper sent to

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 29th June, 1600.

Cecil, indorsed with the caution, "*To read, and burn.*" It contained this passage:—"Nicolson tells me he understands, by one who never abused him, that the King is, by all means, seeking a party, and hath a party in England; and by party or faction, if he can have commodity by either, * * intends not to tarry upon her Majesty's death, but take time so soon as without peril he can."[1]

It is probably from this moment that we may date the actual rise of the Gowrie conspiracy. Elizabeth and James were, as we have just seen, on the very worst terms with each other. Gowrie, by every feeling of education, interest, and revenge, was attached to England and its Queen; and his conduct in the Convention had now thrown him into mortal opposition with the King of Scots. James was intriguing with the Queen's subjects in England. It was suspected he had fomented the rebellion in Ireland; and all this at a moment when the Queen was most likely to resent it deeply; for she had lately been roused and irritated by the insane projects of Essex. Although aged, Elizabeth was still unbroken in health; yet James must be watching for her death, and openly admonishing his subjects to make preparations for taking possession of her crown. This Gowrie knew; and he reckoned on the support of England in anything he undertook against the King. He could build, too, with certainty on the favourable opinion of the lesser barons, and the influential body of the burghs. They had

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., 9th July, 1600. Secret information sent in the Letter, indorsed, *To read and burn.*

already made their stand against the King; in the convention Gowrie had joined them; and they understood each other. On the Kirk he could rely with still more certainty: he was the darling hope of the Presbyterian party, the son of their martyr; the youthful Daniel, who had kept his first faith entire in the bosom of idolatry, and in the very head-quarters of Antichrist. Could he doubt that, in any attempt to stay the headlong haste with which their unhappy King seemed to be throwing himself into the arms of the Catholic party, he would fail to have the whole force of the Kirk upon his side? All this was encouraging; and when, in addition to these inducements, he contemplated the rich reward awaiting his success, if he made himself master of the King's person; the gratification of his ambition, power, place, fame, above all, revenge; was it likely that a man of Gowrie's temperament would resist them all? Besides, he had enemies: his death and ruin, if we may believe one who must have had good cause of knowledge, were already resolved on;[1] and if he did not become the assailant, it was a narrow chance but he might prove the victim. If, on the other hand, he could but strike the blow, his popularity and high connexions promised him many friends, on whose concurrence he could safely reckon.

But how was the blow to be struck? Here was the whole difficulty and danger; and here, young as he was, Gowrie appears to have devised a plot unlike any hitherto known in his country's history, although fertile in conspiracies: more Italian than Scottish; crafty,

[1] See p. 325.

rather than openly courageous; and, from its very originality, not, perhaps, unlikely to have succeeded, had the parts assigned to the conspirators been differently cast. His design appears to have been to decoy the King, by some plausible tale, into his castle of Gowrie, on the Tay; to separate him from his suite, and compel him, by threats of instant death, to suffer himself to be carried aboard a boat which should be waiting on the river for the purpose. This was the first act in the projected plot: in the second, the vessel was to push instantly out to sea; and the royal prisoner was to be conveyed, in a few hours, to an impregnable little fortalice which overhung the German Ocean, and where, if well victualled, a garrison of twenty men could, for months, have defied a royal army. To communicate with England, and administer the government in the royal name, but under the dictation of Gowrie and his faction, would then be easy. It had been repeatedly done before in the history of the country, and very recently in the Raid of Ruthven; why then should it not be done again?

In all this projected scheme there was some rashness; something smacking of youth, audacity, and revenge; but there was also some sagacity. Since the days of the conspiracy against Riccio, down to the Raid of Ruthven, most of the plots which chequer and stain the history of the country had failed, from admitting too many into their secret. A band or covenant had been drawn up; a correspondence opened with England; the Envoy at the Scottish Court had been admitted to the secret; the Kirk

consulted; the pulse of the burghs and barons felt; and so many points presented for suspicion to work on, and treachery to be rewarded, that success was unlikely, and discovery almost inevitable. That Gowrie had observed this, and had deeply studied the subject of "Conspiracies against Princes" under Machiavel, the most acute of masters, we know from a curious anecdote preserved by Spottiswood. A short time before his unhappy death, a friend found him in the library, with a volume of the great Florentine in his hand. On inquiring the subject of his studies: showing him the book, he observed that it was a collection of the most famous conspiracies against princes. "A perilous subject," was the reply. "Yes," said the young conspirator; "perilous: because most of such plots have been foolishly contrived, and have embraced too many in the secret. He who goes about such a business, should beware of putting any man on his counsel."[1]

Under this idea, Gowrie admitted to his secret as few associates as possible; and his accomplices were men on whom he had the most implicit reliance. They appear to have been only four in number: his brother, Alexander Ruthven, commonly called the Master of Ruthven, who held an office in the King's chamber; Robert Logan of Restalrig, a Border baron, distantly connected with the Gowrie family; a third person of rank and consequence, but whose name is still a mystery; and, lastly, an old ruffian

[1] Spottiswood, History, p. 460. Hailes' Notes on the Gowrie Conspiracy.

follower of Logan's, called Laird Bower. Logan was a man already known to Sir Robert Cecil; who, on making some inquiries regarding him in 1599, received from the celebrated Lord Wylloughby, then Governor of Berwick, this brief character of the Scottish Border baron:—"There is such a Laird of Lesterligg, as you write of: a main loose man; a great favourer of thieves reputed; yet a man of a good clan, as they here term it; and a good fellow."[1] The character here given of Logan was far too favourable: for there is no doubt that he was a desperate, reckless, and unprincipled villain, although a person of a good house, and true to his friends, according to the principles of that Border code under which he had been bred. He had run through a large estate in every kind of dissipation and excess, was a mocker at religion, had been a constant follower of the notorious Bothwell, and was now drowned in debt; yet, bad as he was, Laird Bower, his brother-conspirator, his chamberlain, or household man, as he termed him, appears to have been a shade blacker. It was to this old Borderer that the perilous task was committed, of carrying the letters which passed between Logan and Gowrie. Bower had received his nurture and education in the service of David Hume of Manderston, commonly called "Davie the Devil;" and in this Satanic school had become a more debauched and daring ruffian than his master; who described him, in writing to Gowrie, as a worthy fellow, who

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, 1st January, 1598-9. The name is sometimes written Lestelrig, sometimes Restalrig.

would not spare to ride to *Hell's yett* to pleasure him.[1] Of the character of the other unknown conspirator, nothing can be said, as his name remains yet a shadow. But if we may trust to popular report, Alexander, the Master of Ruthven, was a young man of the highest promise; amiable, accomplished, gentle almost to a fault, and a universal favourite at Court; yet, strange as it may appear, the execution of that part of the plot requiring the utmost sternness, promptitude, and decision, was committed to this youth. He it was on whom his brother laid the task of decoying the King into Gowrie House, and forcing him into the boat; whilst Gowrie himself undertook to amuse or intimidate the suite; and Logan was to have his house of Fastcastle ready to receive the royal prisoner.

Both these mansions, Gowrie House and Fastcastle, were, from their construction and situation, singularly-well calculated for the attempt against the King. The first was a large baronial mansion, of quadrangular shape, built in the town of Perth, and on the border of the Tay, the river washing the garden; and fortified by a wall which ran along the bank, and was flanked by two strong towers. Its apartments were numerous; arranged, as was usual in those times, *en suite*, and so as to communicate with each other; and amongst them was a long gallery, which extended along one side of the square, and communicated, by a door at the end, with a chamber which, in its turn, led to a small circular

[1] Logan to Gowrie, in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 285.

room constructed in the interior of a turret. This gallery, and the other apartments, were accessible by a broad oaken staircase; but the turret, or round room, could be reached also by a back spiral turnpike: so that a person who had entered it through the gallery, might escape, or could be conveyed away without again traversing the principal staircase.

Fastcastle, the residence or den of Logan, was the very opposite of Gowrie House; being a single square and massive feudal tower, standing on the brink of a steep and almost perpendicular black rock, which rose to the height of two hundred feet above the German Ocean. From the sea, it was completely inaccessible, unless to those who knew the secret of its steps cut in the rock, and could unlock the iron bolts and doors which defended them; and on the land side, the isthmus on which it stood was connected with the mainland by so narrow a neck, that any attempt to force its little drawbridge was hopeless. The distance from Gowrie House to Fastcastle, by sea, was about seventy miles; from Fastcastle to the English Border, about twenty-five miles.

It is now time to introduce the reader to the most interesting part of this strange story: the letters of the conspirators themselves. It appears from these documents, which were not discovered until many years after the deep tragedy in which the conspiracy concluded, that early in the month of July 1600, Gowrie wrote to Logan appointing a secret meeting, to confer "*on the purpose he knew of.*" This letter

is not now in existence; but it was brief, alluding to what had passed before between them, and stating that Logan's absence in Lothian had prevented Gowrie from coming to see him at Fastcastle.[1] On the 18th July, 1600, Logan addressed a letter, which still remains, to the unknown conspirator already mentioned. It was in these terms:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—My duty with service remembered. Please you understand, my Lord of Go. and some others, his Lordship's friends and weil-willers, who tender his Lordship's better preferment, are upon the resolution you know, for the revenge of that cause; and his Lordship has written to me anent that purpose; whereto I will accord, in case you will stand to and bear a part: and before ye resolve, meet me and Mr A. R. [Alexander Ruthven] in the Canongate on Tuesday the next week; and be as wary as ye can. Indeed, M. A. R. spoke with me four or five days' since; and I have promised his Lordship an answer within ten days at farthest.

"As for the purpose, how M. A. R. [Mr Alexander Ruthven] and I have set down the course, it will be ane very easy done turn, and not far by[2] that form, with the like stratagem, whereof we had conference in Cap.h. But in case you and M. A. R. forgather,[3] because he is somewhat *consety*,[4] for God's sake be very wary with his reckless *toys of Padua*: for he told

[1] Examinations of George Sprot, printed in Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 272.

[2] By; different from.

[3] Forgather; meet.

[4] *Consety*; flighty.

me one of the strangest tales of a nobleman of Padua that ever I heard in my life, resembling the like purpose." * * * After assuring him that he might place implicit faith in Laird Bower, the bearer of the letter, Logan again thus alluded to the plot:—

"Always to our purpose, I think it best for our plat[1] that we meet all at my house of Fastcastle: for I have concluded with M. A. R. how I think it shall be meetest to be convoyed quietest in a boat by sea; at which time, upon sure advertisement, I shall have the place very quiet and well provided.

"And as I receive your answer, I will post this bearer to my Lord. And therefore I pray you, as you love your own life, as it is not a matter of mowise,[2] be circumspect in all things, and take no fear but all shall be well." * * * *

Logan then went on to warn his friend not to reveal anything of the plot either to Gowrie's old tutor, Mr William Rhynd, or to his brother Lord Home, before "the turn were done." He thus concluded:—

"When you have read, send this letter back again with the bearer, that I may see it burnt myself; for so is the fashion in such errands; and, if you please, write your answer on the back hereof, in case ye will take my word for the credit of the bearer. And use all expedition; for the turn wald not[3] be long delayed. Ye know the King's hunting will be shortly; and then shall be the best time, as M. A. R. has assured me that my Lord has resolved to enterprise that matter."[4]

[1] Plat; plot, scheme. [2] Mowise; *mows*—mummery.
[3] Wald not; cannot.
[4] Pitcairn, Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 282, 283.

This letter of Logan's was dated from Fastcastle, 18th July; and on the same day he sent the following letter, connected with the conspiracy, to Laird Bower, from his house in the Canongate of Edinburgh, informing him of a second letter "concerning the purpose, which he had received from Gowrie."

"LAIRD BOWER,—I pray you hast you fast to me about the errand I told you, and we shall confer at length of all things. I have received a new letter from my Lord of Go., concerning the purpose that M. A., his Lordship's brother, spake to me before; and I perceive I may have advantage of Dirlton in case his other matter take effect, as we hope it shall. Always, I beseech you, be at me the morn[1] at even; for I have assured his Lordship's servant that I shall send you over the water within three days, with a full resolution of all my will anent[2] all purposes. As I shall indeed recommend you and your trustiness to his Lordship, as ye shall find an honest recompense for your pains in the end. I care not for all the land I have in this kingdom, in case I get a grip[3] at Dirlton: for I esteem it the pleasantest dwelling in Scotland. For God's cause, keep all things very secret, that my Lord, my brother, get no knowledge of our purposes; for I [wald] rather be eirdit[4] quick."[5]

Between the 18th of July, the date of both these letters, and the 27th of the same month, the con-

[1] The morn; to-morrow.
[2] Anent; touching.
[3] Grip; hold.
[4] Eirdit quick; buried alive.
[5] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 283.

spirators appear to have met; and the manner in which the attempt was to be made was arranged. It only remained to fix the precise day. This appears from the following letter of Logan, sent to the unknown conspirator, from his house in the Canongate, on the 27th of July:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—All my hartly duty with humble service remembered. Since I have taken on hand to enterprise with my Lo. of Go., [Lord of Gowrie,] your special and only best beloved, as we have set down the plat already, I will request you that ye will be very circumspect and wise, that no man get an advantage of us. I doubt not but ye know the peril to be both life, land, and honour, in case the matter be not wisely used. And, for my own part, I shall have a special respect to my promise that I have made to his Lo., and M. A., his Lo. brother, although the scaffold were set up. If I cannot win to Falkland the first night, I shall be timely in St Johnston on the morn. Indeed, I lippened[1] for my Lo. himself, or else M. A., his Lo. brother, at my house of Fastcastle, as I wrote to them both. Always I repose on your advertisement of the precise day with credit to the bearer; for howbeit he be but a silly, auld, gleid[2] carle, I will answer for him that he shall be very true.

"I pray you, Sir, read, and either burn or send again with the bearer; for I dare hazard my life, and all I have else in the world, on his message, I

[1] Looked for; expected.

[2] Gleid; squinting.

have such proof of his constant truth. So commits you to Christ's holy protection."[1]

Two days after this, on the 29th July, and only a week before the attempt and fatal catastrophe, Logan sent Laird Bower with the following letter to Gowrie. I give it all, as every word of its contents is of importance.

"My Lo.,—My most humble duty, &c. At the receipt of your Lo. letter I am so comforted, especially at your Lo. purpose communicated to me therein, that I can neither utter my joy, nor find myself able how to encounter your Lo. with due thanks. Indeed, my Lord, at my being last in the town, M. A., your Lo. brother, imparted somewhat of your Lordship's intention anent that matter unto me; and if I had not been busied about some turns of my own, I thought to have come over to S. Jo.[2] and spoken with your Lo. Yet always, my Lo., I beseech your Lo., both for the safety of your honour, credit, and, more than that, your life, my life, and the lives of many others, who may, perhaps, innocently smart for that turn afterwards, in case it be revealed by any; and, likewise, the utter wrecking of our lands and houses, and extirpating of our names; look that we be all as sure as your Lo.; and I myself shall be for my own part; and then I doubt not, but, with God's grace, we shall bring our matter to a fine,[3] which shall bring contentment to us all that ever wished for the revenge of the Maschevalent[4] massacring of our dearest friends.

[1] Pitcairn, vol. ii., p. 284.
[2] St Johnston, or Perth.
[3] End.
[4] Machiavelian.

"I doubt not but M. A., your Lo. brother, has informed your Lo. what course I laid down to bring all your Lo. associates to my house of Fastcastle by sea, where I should have all materials in readiness for their safe receiving a-land, and into my house, making, as it were, but a matter of pastime in a boat on the sea, in this fair summer tide; and none other strangers to haunt my house while[1] we had concluded on the laying of our platt, which is already devised by Mr Alexander and me. And I would wish that your Lordship would either come or send M. A. to me; and thereafter I should meet your Lo. in Leith, or quietly in Restalrig, where we should have prepared a fine *hattit kit*,[2] with sugar, confits, and wine, and thereafter confer on matters: and the sooner we brought our purpose to pass, it were the better, before harvest. Let not M. W. R., [Mr Wm. Rhynd,] your old pedagogue, ken[3] of your coming; but rather would I, if I dare be so bold to entreat your Lo. once to come and see my own house, where I have kept my Lo. Bo. [Lord Bothwell] in his greatest extremities, say the K. and his Council what they would. And in case God grant us a happy success in this errand, I hope both to have your Lo. and his Lo., with many others of your lovers and his, at a good dinner before I die. Always, I hope, that the King's buck-hunting at Falkland this year shall prepare some dainty cheer for us against that dinner the next year. *Hoc jocose*, to animate your Lo. at this

[1] While; until.

[2] A Scottish dish, composed of coagulated milk, and eaten with rich cream and sugar.

[3] Know.

time; but afterwards we shall have better occasion to make merry.

"I protest, my Lo., before God, I wish nothing with a better heart, nor[1] to achieve to that which your Lo. would fain attain unto: and my continual prayer shall tend to that effect; and with the large spending of my lands, goods, yea, the hazard of my life shall not affright me from that; although the scaffold were already set up, before I should falsify my promise to your Lo., and persuade your Lo. thereof. I trow your Lo. has a proof of my constancy ere now.

"But, my Lo., whereas your Lo. desires, in my letter, that I crave my Lo., my brother's mind, anent this matter; I alluterly[2] dissent from that, that he should ever be a councillor thereto: for, in good faith, he will never help his friend, nor harm his foe. Your Lo. may confide more in this old man, the bearer hereof, my man Laird Bower, nor in my brother; for I lippen my life, and all I have else, in his hands: and I trow he would not spare to ride to Hell's yett[3] to pleasure me; and he is not beguiled of my part to him. Always, my Lo., when your Lo. has read my letter, deliver it to the bearer again, that I may see it burnt with my ain een,[4] as I have sent your Lo. letter to your Lo. again; for so is the fashion I grant. And I pray your Lo., rest fully persuaded of me, and of all that I have promised; for I am resolved, howbeit I were to die the morn,[5]

[1] Nor; than. [2] Utterly; entirely. [3] Hell's gate.
[4] Own eyes. [5] Although I were to die to-morrow.

I man[1] entreat your Lō. to exspede[2] Bower, and give him strait direction, on pain of his life, that he take never a wink of sleep until he see me again, or else he will utterly undo us. I have already sent another letter to the gentleman your Lo. kens,[3] as the bearer will inform your Lo. of his answer and forwardness with your Lo.; and I shall show your Lo. farther, at meeting, when and where your Lo. shall think meetest. To which time, and ever, commits your Lo. to the protection of Almighty God.—From Gunnisgreen, the 29th of July, 1600.

"Your Lo. own sworn and bound man to obey and serve, with efald[4] and ever ready service, to his utter power, to his life's end. RESTALRIG.

"Prays your Lo. hold me excused for my unseemly letter, quilk is not so well written as mister[5] were; for I durst not let ony[6] of my writers ken of it, but took two sundry idle days to it myself.

"I will never forget the good sport that M. A., your Lo. brother, told me of a nobleman of Padua; it comes so oft to my memory; and, indeed, it is *a paras tewr*[7] to this purpose we have in hand."[8]

Two days after the date of this letter to Gowrie, on the 31st of July, Logan, being still at his house of Gun's Green, wrote the following letter to the unknown conspirator:—

"RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,—My hartly duty re-

[1] Must. [2] Hasten. [3] Knows. [4] True.
[5] Need were. [6] Any. [7] Apropos; in point.
[8] Pitcairn's Crim. Trials, vol. ii., pp. 284, 286.

membered. Ye know I told you, at our last meeting in the Canongate, that M. A. R., my Lord of Gowrie's brother, had spoken with me anent the matter of our conclusion; and, for my own part, I shall not be hindmost. And sensyne[1] I gat a letter fra his Lordship's self for that same purpose; and upon the receipt thereof, understanding his Lordship's frankness and forwardness in it, God kens[2] if my heart was not lifted ten stegess.[3] I posted this same bearer till his Lordship, to whom you may concredit all your heart in that as well as I; for an[4] it were my very soul, I durst make him messenger thereof, I have sic[5] experience of his truth in many other things. He is a silly, auld, gleid[6] carle,[7] but wondrous honest. And as he has reported to me his Lordship's answer, I think all matters shall be concluded at my house of Fastcastle; for I, and M. A. R., concluded that you should come with him and his Lordship, and only ane other man with you, being but only four in company, intil[8] one of the great fishing-boats by sea to my house, where ye shall land as safely as on Leith shore; and the house, agane[9] his Lordship's coming, to be quiet: and when you are about half a mile from shore, to gar set forth a waff.[10] But, for God's sake, let neither any knowledge come to my Lord my brother's ears, nor yet to M. W. R., my Lordship's auld pedagog; for my brother is 'kittle to shoe be-

[1] Since then. [2] Knows. [3] Stages, degrees. [4] If. [5] Such.
[6] Old, squinting. [7] *Carle*, a man past 50 years of age. [8] In.
[9] Agane. The house to be kept quiet, awaiting his lordship's coming. [10] To cause set forth a signal.

hind,'[1] and dare not enterprise for fear: and the other will dissuade us from our purpose with reasons of religion, which I can never abide.

"I think there is none of a noble heart, or carries a stomach worth a penny, but they would be glad to see a contented revenge of Grey Steil's death.[2] And the sooner the better, or else we may be marred and frustrated; and, therefore, pray his Lordship be quick. And bid M. A. remember the sport he told me of Padua; for I think with myself that the cogitation on that should stimulate his Lordship. And for God's cause, use all your courses *cum discrecione*. Fail not, Sir, to send back again this letter; for M. A. learnit me that fashion, that I may see it destroyed myself. So, till your coming, and ever, commits you heartily to Christ's holy protection.—From Gunnisgreen, the last of July, 1600."

These letters explain themselves. Their import cannot be mistaken; their authenticity has never been questioned; they still exist;[3] and although they do not open up all the particulars of the intended attempt, they establish the reality of the Gowrie conspiracy beyond the possibility of a doubt. The first proves that the Master of Ruthven and Logan had set down the course or plot for the preferment of Gowrie and the revenge of his father's death; that the conspirators were to meet at Fastcastle; and that they had fixed "the King's hunting" as the most favourable time

[1] Difficult to shoe behind; not to be trusted.

[2] Grey Steil, a popular name of Gowrie's father, taken from an old romance, called "Grey-Steil."

[3] In the General Register House, Edinburgh.

for their attempt. Logan, it is seen from the same letter, did not think his brother, Lord Home, or Gowrie's old tutor, Mr William Rhynd, by any means safe persons to be intrusted with the secret of the conspiracy. In the second letter to Bower, we have a glance at the rich bribe by which Gowrie had secured the assistance of Logan, the estate of Dirlton; and in the third, his resolution to keep his promise "although the scaffold were set up," with his expectation to have speedy intimation sent him of the precise day when the attempt was to be made, and his presence required at St Johnston. Logan's letter to Gowrie is still more minute. It contains the determination to revenge the Machiavelian massacre of their dearest friends; the intended rendezvous of the associates at Fastcastle, who, under the mask of a pleasure party by sea, were to be conveyed into that stronghold; the previous secret conference to be held at Restalrig over their "*hattit kit and wine*;" the good cheer and happy success which the King's buck-hunting was to bring them; the solemn and earnest injunctions of secrecy,—life and lands, name and fame, hanging on the issue; the allusion to the strange tale of Padua, so similar to their present purpose, that it seems to have haunted the "consety" or high-wrought imagination of Mr Alexander Ruthven; the necessity of destroying their letters: all this is contained in Logan's letter to Gowrie himself; and in his last letter to the unknown conspirator, we have the direction how the signal is to be given at sea to those who were to be on the look-out from Fastcastle; the exultation and joy at

Gowrie's frankness and forwardness; the last consultation appointed to be at Fastcastle; Logan's candid character of himself, as utterly unable to abide all arguments from religion; his exhortations to be speedy, and his anticipation of a glorious revenge for the death of "Grey Steil," the affectionate *sobriquet* or nickname of the late Earl of Gowrie. All this is so clearly established by the correspondence, and so completely proves the existence of Gowrie's plot for the surprise of the King, and the meeting of the conspirators at Fastcastle, that he who doubts must be too desperate in his scepticism to be reached by any evidence whatever. But we must proceed.

This last letter of Logan's was written on Thursday, the 31st July; and all that passed in the secret conclave of the conspirators, during the three succeeding days, till the night of Monday the fourth of August, is a blank. On that night Gowrie called his chamberlain, Andrew Henderson, into his bed-chamber, and commanded him to be ready to ride on the morrow early with his brother, the Master, to Falkland, and to bring back with speed any letter, or message, which he might receive from him.[1]

The morning of Tuesday, the 5th of August, found the King and his nobles in the great park at Falkland, ready to mount on horseback, and proceed to their sport. It was still early, between six and seven o'clock: all was bustle and preparation; and the King

[1] Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 175.

stood beside the stables surrounded by his hounds and huntsmen, when Alexander Ruthven, Gowrie's younger brother, came up, and, with a low courtesy, kneeling and uncovering, craved a moment's private audience on matter of the utmost moment. His expression was perturbed, his manner hurried; and the King, expecting a communication of importance, walked aside with him. Ruthven then declared, that he, the evening before, had met a suspicious-looking fellow without the walls of St Johnston, with his face muffled in a cloak; and, perceiving him to be terrified and astonished when questioned, he had seized him, and, on searching, had found a large pot-full of gold pieces under his cloak. This treasure, with the man who carried it, he had secured, he said, in a small chamber in Gowrie House; and he now begged the King to ride with him to Perth on the instant, and make sure of it for himself, as he had not even revealed the discovery to his brother the Earl. James at first disclaimed having any right to money thus found; but when the Master, to one of his questions, stated that it seemed foreign gold, the vision of crowns of the sun and Spanish priests rose to the royal suspicion; and he was about to despatch some servant of his own, to ride instantly with a warrant to the Provost, and seize the treasure, when Ruthven strongly protested against it; declaring that if either the magistrates or Gowrie got their fingers on the gold, it might chance that very few pieces would ever come into his Majesty's purse; and that all that he implored, in recompense for his fidelity, was that the

King would ride with him to Perth, see the treasure, and judge with his own eyes.

The Court was now on horseback; the morning wearing on; the baying of the hounds, and cheering of the huntsmen, told that the game was found; and the King, impatiently putting an end to the interview, promised Ruthven an answer after he had killed the buck. James then galloped off; but the story haunted him; and on the first check, he sent for Ruthven, who lingered near at hand, and whispered to him, that he had resolved, the moment the chase was over, to accompany him to Perth. The young man instantly despatched Andrew Henderson, the chamberlain, who, in obedience to Gowrie's orders the night before, had, with Andrew Ruthven, accompanied him to Falkland; bidding him gallop to Perth, and tell Gowrie that the King would be there within a brief space, and slenderly attended.

When the chase was ended, which lasted till near eleven, the King surprised his courtiers by telling them he meant to ride immediately to St Johnston, to speak with the Earl of Gowrie; and without giving himself or his nobles time to send for fresh horses, or waiting, as was usual, for the "*curry* of the deer,"[1] he rode off with Ruthven at so furious a pace, that he was some miles on the road before Lennox, or any of his suite, overtook him. All this time Ruthven had been agitated and restless; now pressing the King to finish the chase; now urging him not to wait for fresh horses; now insisting that neither Lennox, Mar, nor any number of his nobles should

[1] French, *curer;* to cleanse; the ripping up and cleansing the deer.

follow him, as it might spoil all; and this to such a degree that James, as he pushed on, began to suspect and hesitate, and calling Lennox aside, told him the strange errand he was riding on; asking him if Ruthven, his brother-in-law, had ever shown any symptoms of derangement. The Duke pronounced the story utterly improbable; but affirmed he had never seen anything like madness in Ruthven. "At all events," said James, "do not you, Lennox, fail to follow me into the room where this fellow and his treasure is." This private conference was not unobserved by Ruthven. He had a short time before despatched his other servant, Andrew Ruthven, to ride forward with a second message to Perth, and now coming up close to the King, implored him to make none living acquainted with their purpose, till he had himself seen the fellow and the treasure. It seems to have been at this moment that Sir Thomas Erskine, who had overtaken the King on the road, privately asked Lennox how it came that Ruthven had got the King's ear, and carried off his Majesty from his sport; to which Lennox jocularly answered, "Peace man; we shall all be turned into gold."[1] The whole party then rode forward; and on coming within a mile of Perth, Ruthven, telling the King he must give warning to his brother, galloped on before.

We must now for a moment turn to Gowrie, whom Henderson, on his arrival at Gowrie House, found, with two friends, in his chamber. He instantly left them, and inquired, secretly and earnestly, what word he had brought from his brother: had he sent a letter; how

[1] Lloyd's Worthies, p. 783.

had the King taken with the Master; who were with his Majesty at the hunting, many or few; what noblemen, what names? To these hurried questions Henderson answered by giving the message sent by young Ruthven: that the King would be with him incontinent, and he must prepare dinner. He added, that James had received the Master kindly, and laid his hand on his shoulder when he did his courtesy: that his Majesty had sundry of his own suite with him, and some Englishmen; and that the only nobleman he noticed was my Lord Duke. This was at ten o'clock.[1] Henderson then went to his own house, pulled off his boots, and returned to Gowrie House about eleven, when the earl commanded him to put on his "*secret*,[2] and plate sleeves," as he would require his assistance to seize a Highlandman in the Shoe Gate. At half-past twelve Gowrie took his dinner, having, as his guests, three friends of the neighbourhood; and as they sat at table, Andrew Ruthven, the Master's second messenger, entered the room, and whispered to the earl. Soon after came the Master himself, upon which Gowrie and his friends rose; and now for the first time openly alluding to the royal visit, he assembled his servants, and walked to the Inch or meadow near the town, where he met the King.

James' train did not exceed twelve or fifteen persons, including Lennox, Mar, Sir Thomas Erskine, John Ramsay his page, Dr Hugh Herries, Lords Lindores and Inchaffray, with a few others. They

[1] Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn's Crim. Trials, vol. ii. p. 176.
[2] A secret shirt of mail worn under the clothes.

wore their green hunting-dresses, and were wholly without armour; a horn slung over their shoulder, and a sword or deer-knife at their girdle, being all they carried. Gowrie's servants and followers amounted nearly to fourscore; but many of these must have been townsmen and lookers on. On coming to Gowrie House the King called for a drink, and was somewhat annoyed at having to wait long for his welcome cup, and more than an hour for his dinner. During this interval Alexander Ruthven sent for the key of the long room, called the Gallery Chamber, which immediately adjoined the cabinet where the King dined. At the end of this gallery was another apartment, which opened into a circular room, formed in the interior of a turret; and this room, it is important to observe, could be entered, not only by the door at the end of the gallery, but by another door communicating with a back stair or turnpike, called the Black Turnpike. Soon after the King had sat down to dinner, Gowrie, who waited upon him, sent for Henderson, and taking him aside secretly, bade him go to his brother in the gallery. He obeyed; found Mr Alexander there, and almost instantly after was joined by the Earl himself, who commanded him to remain where he was, and obey the Master's orders.[1] Henderson was now fully armed, all except the head: he had noted that the tale about seizing a Highland thief in the Shoe Gate was a false pretence; and beginning to suspect some treason, asked, in an agitated tone, "What they were about to do with him?"

[1] Henderson's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 177.

The only reply of Gowrie and the Master was to point to the little chamber, make him enter the door, and lock him up.

All this occupied but a few minutes, and Gowrie then returned to the King, who was sitting at his dessert; whilst the Duke and the rest of his suite were dining in the next room. They had nearly finished their repast, when James, in a bantering manner, accused Gowrie of having been so long in foreign parts as to have forgotten his Scottish courtesies. "Wherefore, my Lord," said he, "since ye have neglected to drink either to me or my nobles, who are your guests, I must drink to you my own welcome. Take this cup, and pledge them the *King's scoll*[1] in my name." Gowrie, accordingly, calling for wine, joined the Duke and his fellows, who were getting up from table; and at this instant Alexander Ruthven seizing the moment when the King was alone, whispered him that now was the time to go. James, rising up, bade him call Sir Thomas Erskine; but he evaded the message, and Erskine never received it. Lennox, too, remembering the King's injunctions, spoke of following his majesty; but Gowrie prevented him, saying, his Highness had retired on a quiet errand, and would not be disturbed;[2] after which, he opened the door leading to his pleasure-ground, and with Lennox, Lindores, and some others, passed into the garden. Thus really cut off from assistance, but believing that he would be followed by Lennox or Erskine, James

[1] The King's scoll; the King's health.

[2] Lennox's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 172.

now followed Ruthven up a stair, and through a suite of various chambers, all of them opening into each other, the Master locking every door as they passed; and observing, with a smile, that now they had the fellow sure enough. At last they entered the small round room already mentioned. On the wall hung a picture with a curtain before it; beside it stood a man in armour; and as the King started back in alarm, Ruthven locked the door, put on his hat, drew the dagger from the side of the armed man, and tearing the curtain from the picture, showed the well-known features of the late Earl of Gowrie, his father. "Whose face is that?" said he, advancing the dagger with one hand to the King's breast, and pointing with the other to the picture. "Who murdered my father? Is not thy conscience burdened by his innocent blood? Thou art now my prisoner, and must be content to follow our will, and to be used as we list. Seek not to escape; utter but a cry, (James was now looking at the window, and beginning to speak;) make but a motion to open the window, and this dagger is in thy heart." The King although alarmed by this fierce address, and the suddenness of the danger, did not lose his presence of mind: and as Henderson was evidently no willing accomplice, he took courage to remonstrate with the Master; reminded him of the dear friendship he had borne him; and "as for your father's death," said he, "I had no hand in it: it was my Council's doing; and should ye now take my life, what preferment will it bring you? Have I not both sons and daughters? You can never be King of Scot-

land; and I have many good subjects who will revenge my death?" Ruthven seemed struck with this, and swore he neither wanted his blood nor his life. "What racks[1] it then," said the King, "that you should not take off your hat in your Prince's presence?" Upon this Ruthven uncovered, and James resumed. "What crave ye, an ye seek not my life?"—"But a promise, Sir," was the reply. "What promise?"—"Sir," said Ruthven, "my brother will tell you." "Go, fetch him, then," rejoined the King; and to induce him to obey, he gave his oath, that till his return he would neither cry out nor open the window. Ruthven consented; commanded Henderson to keep the King at his peril; and left the room, locking the door behind him.

James now, for a moment, had time to breathe; and turning to Henderson, he asked him how he came there. The unhappy man declared he had been shut in like a dog. Would Gowrie do him any mischief? Henderson answered he should die first. "Open the window, then," said James; and scarce had this been done, or rather when it was being done, Ruthven broke into the room again, and swearing there was no remedy, ran in upon the King, seized him by the wrists, and attempted to bind him with a garter or silk cord which he had in his hands. James, by a strong effort, threw himself loose, exclaiming, he was a free Prince, and would never be bound; and Henderson at this moment wrenching away the cord, the King "leapt free," and had almost reached the win-

[1] What lacks; what forbids.

dow, when Ruthven again seized him by the throat with one hand, and thrust the other into his mouth to prevent him giving the alarm. But James now rendered desperate, and exerting his utmost strength, dragged his assailant to the window, and throwing his head half out, though Ruthven's hand was still on his throat, cried out, "Treason! help! Earl of Mar, I am murdered!" Ruthven then dragged him back into the chamber, upbraiding Henderson as a cowardly villain, who would bring death upon them all, and attempted to draw his sword, which James prevented by grasping his right hand.[1] Henderson during this, unlocked the door of the room, and then stood trembling and panic-struck, whilst a desperate wrestle continued between the King and Ruthven.

Leaving James in this struggle for life, we must turn for an instant to Gowrie, who had led Lennox and the other courtiers into the garden. Whilst there, Cranston, one of his attendants, ran up, and informed them that the King had left the castle by the back way, and was riding over the Inch, upon which Gowrie called to horse; and he, Lennox, and the rest, hurrying down the great staircase, and shouting for their horses, some one asked the porter in the court-yard, if the King had passed. He declared he had not; and insisted in his denial, although his master abused him as a lying varlet. Gowrie, upon this, ran back into the house, observing to Mar, he would ascertain the truth; and returning within a few minutes, assured them that the King had really

[1] Henderson's Declaration in Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 178.

gone forth, and must now have reached the South Inch. Scarcely, however, was this falsehood uttered, when it was confuted; for, at this moment, James' loud cry of treason and murder was heard; and, looking up, they saw the King's face at the window of the turret, the features red and flushed with exertion, and a hand on his throat.[1] All was now horror and confusion. Sir Thomas Erskine collared Gowrie, exclaiming, "Traitor, thou shalt die! This is thy work!" but was felled to the ground by Andrew Ruthven, whilst Gowrie asserted his innocence. Lennox's first impulse was to save the King; and he, Mar, and some others, rushed up the great staircase to the hall; but finding the door locked, began to batter it with a ladder which lay hard by.[2] John Ramsay, one of the royal suite, was more fortunate. He remembered the back entry; and running swiftly up the turnpike stair to the top, dashed open the door of the round chamber with his foot, and found himself in the presence of the King and Ruthven, who were wrestling in the middle of the chamber. James, with Ruthven's head under his arm, had thrown him down almost on his knees; whilst the Master still grasped the King's throat.[3] Ramsay was hampered by a hawk, a favourite bird of James', which he held on his wrist; but throwing her off, and drawing his whinger,[4] he made an inef-

[1] Lennox's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 173. Christie's Declaration, Ibid. p. 187.

[2] Id. Ibid., Lindores' Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 181.

[3] Ramsay's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 183.

[4] Whinger; a hunting-knife.

fectual blow at Ruthven; the King calling out to strike low, as the traitor had on a pyne doublet.[1] Ramsay then stabbed him twice in the lower part of the body. The King making a strong effort, pushed him backwards through the door, down the stairs; and, at this moment, Sir Thomas Erskine and Dr Herries rushing up the turnpike, and encountering the unhappy youth, bleeding, and staggering upon the steps, despatched him with their swords. As he lay in his last agony, he turned his face to them, and said, feebly, "Alas! I had not the wyte o't."[2]

All this passed so rapidly, that Ramsay had only time to catch a glance of a figure in armour, standing near the King, but motionless. When he next looked, it had disappeared. This seeming apparition was Henderson, still trembling, and in amazement, from the scene he had witnessed; but who, seeing the door open, glided down the turnpike, and, as it turned out, fled instantly from the house; passing, in his flight, over the Master's dead body.[3] At this moment, as Erskine and Ramsay were congratulating the King, a new tumult was heard at the end of the gallery; and they had scarcely time to hurry James into the adjoining chamber, when Gowrie himself, furious from passion, and armed with a rapier in each hand, rushed along the gallery, followed by seven of his servants, with drawn swords. His vengeance had

[1] Pyne doublet; a concealed shirt of mail worn under the clothes.

[2] I had not the blame of it.

[3] Henderson's Declaration, Ramsay's Declaration, and Sir Thomas Erskine's Declaration, all printed in Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 175-184 inclusive.

been roused to the utmost pitch, by his having stumbled over the bleeding body of his brother; and swearing a dreadful oath that the traitors who had murdered him should die, he threw himself desperately upon Erskine and his companions, who were all wounded in the first onset, and fought at great odds, there being eight to four.[1] Yet the victory was not long doubtful; for, some one calling out that the King was slain, Gowrie, as if paralysed with horror, dropt the points of his weapons, and Ramsay, throwing himself within his guard, passed his sword through his body, and slew him on the spot. The servants, seeing their master fall, gave way, and were driven out of the gallery; and Lennox, Mar, and the rest; who were still thundering with their hammers on the outside of the great door, having made themselves known to the King and his friends within, were joyfully admitted. So effectually, however, had Ruthven secured this door, that it was only by passing a hammer through one of the shattered boards, and with it forcibly wrenching off the lock, that their entrance was effected. The first thing that met their eyes was the dead body of Gowrie lying on the floor, and the King standing unharmed beside it, although still breathless from the recent struggle, and disordered in his dress. At this moment, Graham of Balgone, one of the gentlemen who had accompanied the King from Falkland,

[1] Thomas' Robertson's Declaration, Pitcairn, vol. ii. p. 196; also, Ibid., 197, Ramsay's Declaration, Ibid., 183, 184; and Sir Thomas Erskine's Declaration, Ibid., p. 182; William Robertson's Declaration, Ibid., p. 197.

found a silk garter lying amongst the bent, or rough grass with which the floor of the round chamber was covered; and James immediately recognised it as the same with which Ruthven had attempted to bind his hands.[1] The King then knelt down, and, surrounded by his nobles, who were all on their knees, devoutly thanked God for his deliverance; and prayed that the life which had been thus signally preserved, might be devoted to the welfare of his people.

Scarcely, however, had they risen from their act of gratitude, when a new danger began to threaten them. The city bell was heard ringing, mingled with shouts and cries of vengeance, from an immense mob who beset the outside of Gowrie House, and threatened to blow it up, and bury them in the ruins. Andrew Ruthven and Violet Ruthven, two near relatives of the family of Gowrie, had been busy in rousing the citizens; and, running wildly through the streets, vented curses and maledictions on "the bloody butchers" who had murdered their young Provost and his brother. Nor did many spare to threaten the King himself; crying out, "Come down, come down, thou son of Seignor Davie! thou hast slain a better man than thyself. Come down, green coats, thieves and traitors! limmers that have slain these innocents. May God let never nane o' you have such plants of your ain!"[2] Amid this hubbub, and storm of lamentation and vengeance, James ordered the magistrates to be admitted into the house; and

[1] Grahame's Declaration, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 184; also, p. 217.

[2] Ibid., vol. ii. pp. 197, 198, 199.

having informed them of all that had happened, commanded them to silence the alarum-bell, and quiet the people on their peril; which they at last with difficulty effected. He then ordered them to take care of the dead bodies; and on searching Gowrie's person, there was found in the pocket of his doublet, a little parchment bag full of "magical characters and words of enchantment," which his tutor, Rhynd, recognised as the same he had discovered him wearing at Padua.[1] A belief in sorcery was, as is well known, universal in these days; and such superstitious credit did both King and people give to the little bag of cabalistic words, that they insisted that no blood had issued from the wound till the spell was removed from the body, after which it gushed out profusely.

James now took horse, and, although it was already eight in the evening, rode to Falkland amid crowds of his subjects, who poured in from all quarters to testify their joy at his escape. Next day, the news having been brought to Edinburgh, nothing could exceed the enthusiastic demonstrations of the city; and the same scene was repeated, with still louder and more affectionate welcome, when the King, after a brief retirement at Falkland, passed over the Forth, and entered his capital. The Cross was hung with tapestry; the whole city, led by the judges and magistrates, met him on the sands at Leith; and

[1] Declaration of Rhynd, Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. pp. 218, 219, 220.

from thence he rode in triumph, and amid an immense congregation of all classes of his people, to the Cross, where Mr Patrick Galloway preached to the multitude, gave the story of the treason, and described the miraculous escape of the monarch. His sermon still remains, an extraordinary specimen of the pulpit eloquence of the times.[1]

[1] Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, vol. ii. p. 248.

CHAP. VII.

JAMES THE SIXTH.

1600—1603.

CONTEMPORARY PRINCES.

England.	*France.*	*Germany.*	*Spain.*	*Portugal.*	*Pope.*
Elizabeth.	Henry IV.	Rudolph II.	Philip III.	Philip III.	Clement VIII.

THE general gratulation manifested at the escape of the King from the treason of Gowrie, was not without its alloy. Though almost all believed in the reality of the conspiracy, a section of the Kirk demurred and doubted; and as the death of both the brothers had involved the particulars of the plot in extrême obscurity, the ministers not only declared it questionable that any treason had been intended, but, after a while, started the extravagant theory that the plot was a conspiracy of the King against Gowrie, not of Gowrie against the King. To examine or refute this hypothesis, after the facts which have been given, would be worse than idle; and we are not to be surprised that the incredulity of the Kirk should have incensed the King. But James adopted an unwise mode of refutation. Instead of simply insisting on the great features of the story, on the leading facts which were indisputably proved by

the evidence of Lennox, Mar, Erskine, and Ramsay, and throwing aside all minor matters and apparent contradictions, which, considering the rapidity, terror, and tumult accompanying the event, confirmed rather than weakened the proof; he forgot his dignity; held repeated conferences with the recusant ministers; argued, cavilled, remonstrated, and attempted in vain to explain and reconcile every minute particular. The effect of all this was precisely what might have been anticipated: Mr Robert Bruce, and his little sceptical conclave of brethren, were quite as ingenious in their special pleading as the King; and not only obstinately refused to accuse Gowrie in their pulpits of any plot against the royal person, but insolently insinuated that their two favourites had been murdered. James, finding them immoveable, banished them from the capital; and interdicted them, under pain of death, from preaching in any part of Scotland.

This severity brought four of the recusants, Balcanquel, Watson, Hall, and Balfour, to reason; and they declared themselves thoroughly satisfied of the truth of Gowrie's treason. But Bruce was inexorable. He considered that the question involved not only the truth of the conspiracy, but the spiritual independence of the Kirk; peremptorily refused to exculpate the King, or believe in his report; and was banished to France.[1] Extreme measures were then adopted against the family of Ruthven; and in a Parliament which assembled in the succeeding month of November, the revolting spectacle was exhibited

[1] Spottiswood, p. 461.

of the trial for treason of the livid corpses of these unhappy brothers; which, after the doom of forfeiture had been pronounced, were hauled to the gibbet, hanged and quartered. Their quarters were then exposed in the most conspicuous places of Perth, Stirling, and Dundee, and their heads fixed on the top of the prison in Edinburgh. Nor was the ignominy heaped upon the dead greater than the severity against the living. An attempt was made, on the very night of the catastrophe, to seize the two younger brothers of the house, who, at the time, were living with their unhappy mother at Dunkeld; but a vague report of danger had reached her, and they had escaped in disguise, accompanied by their tutor, who brought them in safety to Berwick.[1] On the King's return to Falkland, on the night of the 5th of August, the sister of Gowrie, Mrs Beatrix Ruthven, who was maid of honour to the Queen, was dismissed and banished from Court. By an Act of the same Parliament which inflicted the forfeiture, the very name of Ruthven was abolished; and the brethren and posterity of the house of Gowrie declared to be for ever incapable of enjoying inheritance, place, or dignity, in Scotland. Such was the avidity with which the favourites of the Court sought, for their own profit, to hunt down this ill-fated family, and fulfil the stern wishes of the King, that but for the generous protection of England, not a male of the house of Ruthven would have been left.

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Scrope to Sir R. Cecil, 11th August, 1600. Ibid., same to the same, 15th August, 1600.

The relations between Elizabeth and James, previous to the conspiracy, had been, we have seen, far from friendly; and this connivance of the Queen at the concealment of the young Ruthvens, with other suspicious reports which arose immediately after the catastrophe, created a strong impression in the mind of the King that the plot had been fostered in England. It was remembered that Gowrie had been admitted, immediately previous to the attempt, into the most intimate confidence of the English Queen; it was observed that Rhynd, Gowrie's tutor, had been found destroying letters at the moment he was apprehended; it was reported that Nicolson, the English resident at Edinburgh, had been seen waiting, early on the morning of the 6th of August, on the shore at Leith, and had whispered to a friend who had betrayed his secret, that he was expecting strange news from the other side of the water. The Earl of Mar accused Lord Wylloughby, the Governor of Berwick, to the King, as being privy to the plot; but his only evidence seems to have been Wylloughby's intimacy with Gowrie at the Court of England; and this high-minded and brave soldier deeming his character far above such suspicion, did not condescend to confute the charge.[1] All these things, however, made an impression. When Nicolson assured the King of his devout thankfulness for his escape, the only answer he received, was an incredulous smile from James;

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 6th August, 1600. Id. Ibid., 11th August, 1600. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil.

and many of the highest rank in Scotland, and best entitled to credit, persisted in tracing the whole conspiracy to England. Many, on the other hand, insisted on the total want of all direct evidence of Gowrie's guilt; and as the letters of Logan of Restalrig had not then come to light, it was difficult to confute such sceptics. Cranston, Craigengelt, and Baron, all of them servants of Gowrie, who were executed for their participation in the enterprise, had been examined by torture; and both in the agony of the "boots," and afterwards on the scaffold, confessed nothing which could implicate their unhappy master or themselves; and the letters of Nicolson, Lord Scrope, and Sir William Bowes, made little scruple of throwing the chief guilt upon the King.

Amid all this obscurity, recrimination, and conjecture, James despatched Captain Preston to carry an account of his escape to Elizabeth; and she, in her turn, sent down Sir Harry Brunker with a singular letter, written wholly in her own hand, which began with congratulations, and concluded in a tone of mingled menace and reproach. Her anger had been raised on a subject which never failed to produce in her mind unusual excitement—James' intrigues as to the succession; and after a few lines on her joy at his escape, she attacked him in the following bitter terms on his impatience for her death, and the indecent haste of his preparations:—

"And tho a King I be, yet hath my funerals been prepared, as I hear, long ere, I suppose, their labour shall be needful; and do hear too much of that daily,

as I may have a good memorial that I am mortal: and withall so be they, too, that make such preparation aforehand; whereat I smile, supposing that such facts may make them readier for it than I.

"Think not but how wilily soever things be carried, they are so well known that they may do more harm to *others* than to me. Of this my pen hath run farther than at first I meant, when the memory of a prince's end made me call to mind such usage, which too many countries talks of, and I cannot stop my ears from. If you will needs know what I mean, I have been pleased to impart to this my servant some part thereof; to whom I will refer me; and will pray God to give you grace to know what best becomes you.

"Your loving Sister and Cousin."[1]

What Elizabeth here alluded to by the memory of a prince's end is somewhat obscure; and her Ambassador's explanation, to which she referred him, does not appear: but the subjects which had especially excited her wrath, were James' correspondence with the Earl of Essex, and his recent reception of Sir Edmund Ashfield,—the same knight who had been so unceremoniously kidnapped by Bowes and Guevara, and Lord Wylloughby. It was mortifying enough to a princess clinging, as still she did, to the last remnant of life and glory, to know that

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Royal Letters, Scotland. Copy of her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand, and sent by Sir Henry Brunker, 21st August, 1600.

her subjects (as she bitterly said) "were looking to the rising sun;" but to find them in the very act of worship, chafed her to the quick; and perhaps nothing weighed heavier against Essex, than his suspected favour for James. There is a remarkable paper preserved, in which Ashfield gave his opinion to the Scottish King on the best mode of accomplishing his great object; and although no letters between James and Essex have been discovered, there seems to be little doubt that this unfortunate nobleman, now a prisoner in the Tower, had engaged to support the claim of the Scottish monarch with the whole weight of his influence. In his advices, Ashfield complimented James on the wisdom and judgment which had distinguished his policy towards the State and people of England. It was a great matter, he observed, that none feared his future government, or had taken offence at his person. He instructed him to employ every effort to gain the common lawyers, who possessed the "gainfullest" offices; were rich and politic men; more feared than beloved by the people, yet very powerful in the State. He ought next, he said, to secure the clergy, who possessed the greatest influence in the universities; were rich; and had most of the people, and many of the nobility and gentry, at their devotion. He should assure them that he had no intention of altering the state of religion, or their livings; which, according to the then computation of the parishes in England, amounted to nine thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven. And if (Ashfield added) the

King declared his inclination to exempt them from the heavy taxes which they now paid, it would go far to bring over the whole body to his service. He also advised the King to have letters ready, at the time of Elizabeth's death, to some one or two of the chiefest "men of command" in every shire and corporation, and promised to procure him a list, not only of the names of such, but also of the collectors and tellers of the Crown rents in England, to whom he might give speedy and special directions, by gracious letters, and win them to his service. His last remark related to the "citizens of London," a body of men whom he described as rich, strong, and well governed; who would stand firm to the preservation of their wealth, and keep themselves neutral till they saw which of the competitors was likely to prove the strongest, and how the game would go.[1]

Immediately after the meeting of that Parliament, in November, in which the forfeiture of the Gowries took place, some unhappy differences broke out between the King and his Queen; this Princess having shown a deeper commiseration for the Ruthven family than James approved of. Amongst the innumerable reports which had arisen, after the catastrophe, it had been whispered that jealousy had lent its sting to the royal wrath. But although Anne of Denmark was sufficiently gay and thoughtless to give some ground for the imputation, the common story of her passion for the Master of Ruthven, seems

[1] MS. Brit. Mus., Julius, F. vi. 133.

to rest on nothing more than the merest rumour. She imprudently had given her countenance to that party at Court, which opposed the extreme severity of the King. It was reported that she had secretly sent for Beatrix Ruthven, and favoured her with a midnight interview in the palace. She suspected that intrigues were carrying on against her; and, on one occasion, if we may believe Nicolson the Envoy of Elizabeth, was so far overcome by passion, that she openly upbraided James with a plot for her imprisonment; and warned him that he would not find her so easy a prey as an Earl of Gowrie. The probability, however, is, that all this was much exaggerated by the gossiping propensities of Nicolson: for the royal couple, whom he represented as on very evil terms on the 31st of October, had been described in a letter, written only two days before, as exceedingly loving, and almost ultra-uxorious.[1] In the midst of this alternate matrimonial shade and sunshine, Anne gave birth to a prince, afterwards the unfortunate Charles the First; whose baptism was held, with great state and pageantry, on the 30th of December.[2]

Captain Preston, James' ambassador, now returned from the Court of England, and brought a more amicable letter from the Queen than her former ironical epistle. In speaking of Gowrie's treason, she declared her fervent wishes, that "the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 28th October, 1600. Also, Ibid., same to same, 31st October, 1600.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 30th Dec., 1600.

bottom of such a cankered malady should be fathomed to the uttermost;" and in alluding to the sorceries of the Earl, and the familiar spirits who were said to wait on his will, expressed her conviction, that "none were left in Hell," so detestable was the treason; but this, she concluded, ought to increase his gratitude to that Almighty Power under whose wings no infernal assaults could reach him, as it gave greater fervency to the *Amen* with which she accompanied her thanksgiving.[1] However involved or pedantic, there was no such obscurity in this letter as in the former; no dark hints or menaces: and its conciliatory tone was met by James with every friendly and grateful offer of assistance against her enemies. He revealed to her all the secret intelligence he had received from Spain, and promised his utmost efforts to raise a force of two thousand Highland soldiers, to act as auxiliaries with the English army in Ireland.[2] When this proposal, however, afterwards came before the Convention of the three Estates, many of the Highlanders and Islesmen sternly refused to bear arms against the Irish; a race to whom they were linked, they said, by common descent, and a common language; whilst the Saxons, or English, whose battles they were to fight, had long been the bitter enemies, both of themselves and their Irish ancestors. What impression

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Royal Letters. Draft copy of her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, sent by his Ambassador, Mr Preston, 14th September, 1600.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 4th July, 1602.

English gold might have made on these patriotic scruples is not certain; for, before the muster could be made, a signal victory of the Deputy, Lord Mountjoy, over the united forces of Tyrone and the Spaniards, rendered all foreign assistance unnecessary.[1]

The fate of Essex, who now lay a condemned prisoner in the Tower, was a subject of deep interest to James. What negotiations had passed between this unfortunate nobleman and the King of Scots, it is extremely difficult to discover. No letters from Essex to James, or from the King to Essex, have been preserved; at least none have been discovered: and the assertion of Rapin, which has been more or less copied by all succeeding English historians, that James was actually a fellow conspirator with him in his insane project for the seizure of the Queen's person, and that it was a part of their plot to dethrone Elizabeth and crown James, is utterly improbable, and supported by no evidence whatever. That the King, in common with all who knew him best, esteemed and admired Essex, and that Essex had written to James after his return from Ireland, is, however, certain; nor is it at all improbable that the English earl had laboured to estrange the Scottish monarch from Cecil, and to persuade him that the Secretary was an enemy to his claim, and favoured the title of the Infanta. There undoubtedly was a time, as we learn from James' secret

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 3d Jan., 1601-2. Ibid., same to the same, 6th February, 1601-2.

instructions to Burlie,[1] (whom he despatched in 1601 to the Grand Duke of Tuscany,) when the Scottish King hesitated whether it would be best to secure the aid of the party of Essex or of Cecil in his secret negotiations with England; but the defeat and imprisonment of this unfortunate nobleman convinced him that his case was desperate; and there is an expression in one of James' memoranda, from which we may infer, that to conciliate Elizabeth he had meanly sent her one of Essex's letters to himself.

However this may be, the Scottish King, some time before the trial of Essex, had determined to communicate with Elizabeth, on some points wherein he found himself aggrieved; and he now, with the view of interceding for his gallant and unfortunate friend, despatched to London two Ambassadors, the Earl of Mar, one of his highest and most trusted nobles, and Mr Edward Bruce Abbot of Kinloss, a person of great judgment and experience. They set off towards the middle of February 1601,[2] with a gallant suite of more than forty persons; and on their arrival at Berwick, were received by the Governor, Lord Wylloughby; who gathered from them, in the course of their brief intercourse, that the chief object of their mission was to congratulate the English Queen on her escape from the treason of Essex, and

[1] Hailes' Cecil Correspondence, p. 112.

[2] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 15th Feb., 1600-1. Written on the day Nicolson communicated to James the intelligence of the determination to execute Essex. Certain news of his death were brought on 4th March, 1600-1.

to remonstrate against the reception and relief of Gowrie's brothers in England.[1] In their conversations with this nobleman, they appear to have avoided any allusion to the probable fate of Essex; yet that James had directed them to intercede for his friend cannot be doubted. His compassion, however, came too late; for Essex was beheaded before the Ambassadors reached London. The original instructions for their mission have not been preserved; but a letter of their royal master to Mar and Kinloss, written soon after their arrival, opens up to us much of its secret history. The real purpose for which they went, was to feel the pulse of the English nobility and people on the great subject of the succession; to secure friends; to discover and undermine opponents; to conciliate the Queen, and, if possible, procure from her a more distinct recognition of James' title to the throne: above all, to gain Secretary Cecil, who was now at the head of the English Government, and on whose friendly disposition James had long believed that everything depended. Many others had been forward in offering their assistance; and to all he prudently gave a cordial reception; but to Cecil alone he looked as the man who had the game in his hand, and whom he described in his letter of instructions as "King there in effect."[2]

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., B.C., Lord Wylloughby to Cecil, 22d Feb., 1601, following the Scottish computation: 1600 the English.

[2] Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, by Lord Hailes, p. 12. From a MS. Letter, St. P. Off., James Hudson to Cecil, 7th March, 1600-1, it appears the Ambassadors arrived in London early in

On the first audience of Mar and Kinloss, however, all seemed likely to miscarry. From the coldness and jealousy of Elizabeth, she appeared to resent some expressions in the King's sealed letter, written wholly in his own hand, and expostulating with her, in very decided terms, against her too easy belief of the unjust imputations so generally circulated against him. He declared that he was impelled by their long friendship and her own example, to unbosom his griefs, and not to suffer any misconstrued thoughts against her actions to take harbour in his heart; for which purpose, having already experienced the mischief which both had suffered from the employment of inferior diplomatic agents, he had now sent one of his highest nobles, the Earl of Mar, and one of his wisest councillors, the Abbot of Kinloss; both of them men of known and constant affection to the continuance of the amity between the two nations and their sovereigns; and whom he had fully instructed to deal with all "that honest plainness which was the undisseverable companion of true friendship." [1]

Their plainness, however, seems to have been rather too much for the temper of Elizabeth, which, at no time very amiable, was now fretted and broken by her increasing infirmities. "Her Majesty," said Cecil to Nicolson, "gave the Earl of Mar nothing but negative answers; the matters being of so sour a

March. Their audience seems to have been on the 22d of March. MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Hudson to Cecil, 21st March, 1600-1.

[1] St. P. Off., Royal Letters, Scotland, James to Elizabeth, wholly in the King's own hand, 10th February, 1601.

nature to the Queen, who loves neither importunity nor expostulation. When the Ambassadors explained the great pecuniary embarrassments of their royal master, and his hopes that, having done so much to assist her against their common enemies, he now expected some return in current coin, she met the proposal with a haughty denial. She would give, she said, no ready money; but, if he continued to deserve it, his pension should be augmented; and in the meantime, it would be well if he, who boasted of his services against the common enemy, would cease all traffic with Spain, and receive less frequent messages from Rome. As to Lady Lennox's lands, which he claimed so confidently, he should not receive a fraction of their rents; his title to them, she thought, was still *in nubibus;* and till he made it out more clearly, the estates were in safe hands. For the other matters on which they had shown themselves so importunate, they were of too delicate and important a nature to be suddenly handled; and she wondered, she said, at the boldness and perseverance with which they had pressed upon her, and dared to broach to her Council, so forbidding a subject.[1] This, of course, alluded to the succession; which, reminding her of the probability of her near dissolution, proved unpalateable in the extreme: so that the Ambassadors wrote to the King in the lowest spirits, and strongly remonstrated with Secretary Cecil on their strange reception. Nothing in the world, they said, in addressing this minister, but their

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Titus, C vii. f. 124, Elizabeth to James, 11th May, 1601.

uncomfortable experience, could have persuaded them that his royal mistress would have treated the offers which regarded her own safety, and the welfare of her people, with so little regard; whilst, on the other hand, she gave so ready an ear to the enemies of their master, and the vile slanders which had been circulated against him. They must make bold to tell him, that there was a great difference between vigilancy and credulity; and that it formed no part of wisdom, "*ponere rumores ante salutem.*"[1]

It is interesting to attend to the directions which this unpromising state of things drew from the Scottish King. The Ambassadors, it would appear, had sought his instructions as to the terms in which they ought to leave the English Queen, if she continued in this unpropitious and distant temper. "As to your doubt," said he, "in what sort to leave there,[2] it must be according to the answer you receive to the former demands: for if ye be well satisfied therein, then must ye have a sweet and kind parting; but if ye get nothing but a flat and obstinate denial, which I do surely look for, then are ye, in both the parts of your commission, to behave yourself thus:—

"First, ye must be the more careful, since ye come so little speed in your public employment with the Queen, to set forward so much the more your *private* negotiation with the country; and if ye see that the people be not in the highest point of discontentment,

[1] MS. Letter, British Museum, Caligula, D ii. f. 470, Earl of Mar and Mr Bruce Abbot of Kinloss to Secretary Cecil, 29th April, 1601.

[2] To leave there, *i.e.*, in what terms you take your leave.

(whereof I already spake,) then must ye, by your labours with them, make your voyage at least not all utterly unprofitable; which doth consist in these points: *First*, to obtain all the certainty ye can of the town of London, that in due time they will favour the right; *Next*, to renew and confirm your acquaintance with the Lieutenant of the Tower; *Thirdly*, to obtain as great a certainty as ye can of the fleet, by the means of Lord Henry Howard's nephew, and of some sea-ports"; *Fourthly*, to secure the hearts of as many noblemen and knights as ye can get dealing with, and to be resolved what every one of their parts shall be at the great day; *Fifthly*, to foresee anent[1] armour for every shire, that against that day my enemies have not the whole commandment of the armour, and my friends only be unarmed; *Sixthly*, that, as ye have written, ye may distribute good seminaries[2] through every shire, that may never leave working in the harvest until the day of reaping come; and generally to leave all things in such certainty and order, as the enemies be not able, in the meantime, to lay such bars in my way as shall make things remediless, when the time shall come.

"Now, as to the terms ye shall leave in with the Queen, in case of the foresaid flat denial, let your behaviour ever be with all honour, respect, and love to her person; but, at your parting, ye shall plainly declare unto her, that she cannot use me so hardly as it shall be able to make me forget any part of that love that I owe to her as to my nearest kinswoman; and

[1] *i. e.* Regarding. [2] Secret agents.

that the greatest revenge I shall ever take of her shall be to pray to God to open her eyes and to let her see how far she is wronged by such base instruments about her, as abuse her ears; and that although I shall never give her occasion of grief in her time, yet the day may come when I shall crave an account at them of their presumption, when there will be no bar betwixt me and them."[1]

Nothing could be more manly and judicious than this advice to his Ambassadors; nothing was more fitted to raise his character in the eyes of the Queen herself, than a line of conduct at once affectionate and firm. Nor were his sentiments and instructions less sound with regard to Secretary Cecil, and those other powerful nobles whom he, at this time, suspected of hostility to his claim, and from whom he had expected better things.

"You shall plainly declare," said he, "to Mr Secretary and his followers, that since now, when they are in their kingdom, they will thus misknow *me*, when the chance shall turn I shall cast a deaf ear to *their* requests: and whereas now I would have been content to have given them, by your means, a preassurance of my favour, if at this time they had pressed to deserve the same; so now they, contemning it, may be assured never hereafter to be heard, but all the Queen's hard usage of me to be hereafter craved at their hands."[2]

This last menace, however, was wholly unnecessary. Cecil, whose prudence had led him, for some

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 9.
[2] Ibid., pp. 8, 9, 10.

years past, to keep aloof from the King of Scots, and to conciliate the favour of his royal mistress, by turning a deaf ear to all proposals from that suspected quarter, was too acute a courtier, and too keenly alive to his own interest, not to discern the exact moment when perseverance in this principle would have been visited with the total ruin of his power. That moment had now arrived. Elizabeth's health was completely shattered; and however earnestly she struggled to conceal the truth from herself, or to assume her usual gaiety before her people, it was but too evident that after her long and proud walk of glory and strength, her feet were beginning to stumble upon the dark mountain, and that the time could not be very far distant when the silver cord must be loosed and the golden bowl be broken. With this prospect before him, Cecil opened, with extraordinary caution, and the most solemn injunctions and oaths of concealment,[1] a negotiation with Mar and Kinloss; and James, who had hitherto suspected him, not only welcomed the advances, but soon gave him his full confidence, and intrusted everything to his management and address. How all this was effected, what were the steps which led from distrust to reconciliation, and from this to undoubting and almost exclusive confidence, cannot be ascertained; but two facts are certain and full of meaning: the first, that Cecil, as appears by a paper preserved at Hatfield, advanced ten thousand pounds out of his own pocket

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, pp. 190, 191; also, pp. 202, 203.

to James, which was never repaid; the second, that this able diplomatist, from being first minister to Elizabeth, upon the death of his mistress stepped at once, without question or opposition, into the same high office under James.

Meanwhile the Scottish Ambassadors profited by this secret influence; and acting under the instructions of one who had the deepest insight into the character of the Queen and the state of the country, were able to follow out their instructions with infinitely greater success than on their first arrival. After a residence of three months in England,[1] they returned to James in the beginning of June; and although all had not succeeded to the extent of his wishes, the assurances which they brought from Elizabeth were friendly and encouraging. She expressed her astonishment, indeed, that the King should have again pressed upon her the same disagreeable matter, on which she had hoped he was already satisfied. It was a bold thing, she said, for any subject of hers to communicate with the King of Scots on so great a cause, without her privity; and he had done well to address her openly: for he might assure himself that she alone could do him good: all *byways* would turn to dust and smoke. As to his griefs, to which he alluded in his letter, her conscience acquitted her of every action which should give him the slightest annoyance; yet she took it kindly that he had unbosomed them, and had sent her so "well-chosen a couple" as Mar and Kinloss. Her letter concluded with this warn-

[1] From about February 20th till June 2d, 1601.

ing, embodied in her usual style of mystery and inuendo:

"Let not shades deceive you, which may take away best substance. * * * An upright demeanour bears ever more poise than all disguised shows of good can do. Remember, that a bird of the air, if no other instrument, to an honest King shall stand instead of many feigned practices, to utter aught that may any wise touch him. And so leaving my scribbles, with my best wishes that you scan what works becometh best a King, and what in end will best avail him, (I rest) your loving sister, that longs to see you deal as kindly as I mean."[1]

Elizabeth's last Parliament met (October 27;) and the Queen, although utterly unable for the exertion, insisted on opening it in person, and with unusual pomp; but she fainted under the weight of the royal robes, and would have fallen to the ground, if some gentlemen at hand had not caught her in their arms.[2] The Irish war, and the necessity of a large subsidy to support it, formed the great business for which Parliament had assembled; and the Queen had determined to avail herself of James' recent offer, to send her a body of Highland auxiliaries from the Isles. Lord Mountjoy, the Deputy, was still surrounded by difficulties. He had to hold out, not only against the

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Royal Letters, Scotland. Indorsed, Copy of Her Majesty's letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand. See, also, her public letter under the Privy Seal, delivered to the Ambassadors on their return, MS. Brit. Mus., Titus, C. vii., fol. 124, dated 11th May, 1601.

[2] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 26.

native Irish, led by O'Neill, but against a force of four thousand Spaniards, who had effected a landing at Kinsale, under Don Juan D'Aguilar. To these dangers, threatening England from without, was added the deep discontent of the people at home; who were groaning under that monstrous and oppressive system of monopolies, which had raised the prices of all the necessaries of life to an exorbitant amount. By a monopoly we are to understand a royal patent, which conveyed to some individual the right of exclusively selling any particular commodity; and the power of granting such, the Queen claimed, and justly, as a part of her royal prerogative. But she had now carried the practice to a grinding and ruinous extent. The patentee, if he did not exercise the privilege himself, disposed of it to another; and, in either case, all inferior venders, whether in wholesale or retail, were compelled to pay him a high yearly premium, which, of course, fell eventually on the consumer. This abuse had gone on increasing since the seventeenth year of the Queen's reign; who had found it a convenient way of paying a debt, or satisfying an importunate courtier or creditor, without drawing upon her own privy purse, or risking her popularity by direct taxation.[1] It was to the deep and general discontent occasioned by this, that King James had alluded in his secret instructions to Mar and Kinloss, when he advised them to discover whether the impatience and disgust of the country had increased to such a height that they were un-

[1] Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. p. 380.

willing to keep on terms any longer with Prince or State. In which case, he observed, it would be a pity not to declare himself openly in their favour, or to suffer them to be overthrown for lack of good backing:[1] a sentence, by the way, which proves that Elizabeth had good ground for her jealousy of the intrigues of the Scottish King with her subjects. But on the arrival of Mar and Kinloss, they soon discovered that the execrations of the people were directed rather against the Minister Cecil and the Government, than against the Queen herself; and when Parliament met, and the subject of the Irish war was brought before the Commons, it was soon seen that they knew perfectly how to make this distinction. The safety of the country and the honour of the Queen demanded that they should make every sacrifice to bring the Irish war to a speedy and successful termination; and for this purpose they agreed to one of the largest grants that had been given during this long reign; voting at once four subsidies, and eight tenths and fifteenths, for the expense of the war:[2] but on the odious grievance of monopolies they were firm. Cecil's coach, in going to parliament, had been surrounded by an infuriated mob, which assailed him with curses, and threatened to tear him to pieces. It was time, therefore, to take the alarm; and the Queen, who, however obstinate with her ministers, never struggled beyond the proper point with her people, sent for the speaker of the Commons, and declared her resolution to abolish the

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence, pp. 2, 3. [2] Ibid., p. 25.

whole system.[1] This announcement was received with the utmost joy; the Queen regained her popularity; and soon after this, the total defeat of Tyrone and his Spanish auxiliaries, the successful termination of the war in Ireland, and the destruction of the Spanish galleys, under Spinola, by a combined squadron of the English and Dutch, shed a farewell ray of glory over the last year of her reign. It was now no longer necessary for Elizabeth to court the assistance of James, or to keep in pay the hardy mercenaries of the Scottish Isles: her kingdom was at peace; and resuming her progresses and her gaieties, she struggled to overcome or defy her increasing infirmities; rode to the chase; had country dances in the Privy Chamber; selected a new favourite, in the young Earl of Clanricard; and seemed wholly given up to disport, at a time when it was apparent to every one that her hours had been far better spent in retirement from the world, and preparation for that last scene, which the greatest Prince, as well as the meanest subject, must act alone.[2]

There had been some expectation in Scotland that the question of the succession was to have been agitated in the late Parliament; and the arrival of James' favourite, the Duke of Lennox, at the Court of England, at the moment of its being assembled, seems to have excited the suspicions of the Queen;[3]

[1] Lingard, vol. viii. pp. 380, 381.

[2] Lord Henry Howard to the Earl of Mar, Sept., 1602, Hailes' Cecil Correspondence, pp. 231, 233.

[3] Lord Henry Howard to the Earl of Mar, Nov., 22, 1601, Hailes' Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, p. 16.

but this nobleman, although certainly sent by the King of Scots chiefly to watch over his interests and confirm those secret friendships with which he was strengthening himself, acted with much prudence, paid his court effectually to the English Queen, and lulled all resentment by his frank offer to lead the Scottish auxiliaries against the Spaniards and the Irish. New and alarming reports of the continued preparations of Philip the Third having recently reached the Queen, she was particularly gratified by the secret information which James had transmitted her on the subject, and by the readiness with which he had permitted Lennox to volunteer his services. These, however, she declined; declaring that she would never consent to hazard so valuable a life in so perilous an enterprise, and dismissing him with the most flattering marks of her approbation.[1]

During the Duke's residence in England, his chief care seems to have been to conciliate that party in the State which was opposed to Cecil, and whom this crafty minister represented as inimical to James. It was led by the Earl of Northumberland, Sir Walter Raleigh, and Lord Cobham. Lord Henry Howard, the agent of Cecil, in his secret correspondence with the King of Scots, laboured to persuade that monarch that this faction were little to be trusted, without weight in the country, and altogether desperate, false, and reckless men. The great object of Cecil and Howard was to exalt their own power and

[1] MS. St. P. Off., Copy of the time. Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, 2d December, 1601.

services, and to depreciate every other instrument to whom James might deem himself indebted; and never was there a more revolting picture than that presented by the secret correspondence of these two politicians with their future sovereign. To the King himself, Lord Henry's flattery almost borders upon blasphemy.[1] On all others, except Cecil and his confidants, he pours out an unceasing flood of abuse, slander, bitterness, and contempt; and to that great Princess whom they had idolized in her palmy days, and whose sun was now sinking in sorrow, there is not given a single sigh of regret, not a solitary glance of sympathy. It has been attempted to defend Cecil from being participant in these intrigues, by asserting that the correspondence is not his, and that he is not responsible for the letters of Lord Henry Howard; but the argument will not bear examination. It is true, indeed, that he neither signed nor indited the letters; but he dictated them: he read and approved of them; he despatched them; he was present when the answers were received; he opened the packet which contained them; and King James, when he replies, either in his own person or through

[1] He is the apple of the Eternal eye; the most "inestimable King James, whom neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, shall separate from the affection and vows they have, next to the sovereign possessor, vowed to him; the redoubted monarch, of whose matchless mind Lord Henry thinks, as God's lieutenant on earth, with the same reverence and awe which he owes to God himself when he is on his knees."—Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, pp. 154, 168, 170, 194, 233.

Mr Bruce his late ambassador, addresses Howard as the mere organ of Cecil. To have written in his own person, or to have given Lord Henry Howard any unlimited commission which should have made Cecil responsible for every sentiment uttered by this prince of flatterers, would have been far too bungling and dangerous an expedient for so profound a politician, so accomplished a lover of mystery and intelligence as this Statesman. But every letter in the correspondence shows that a finer system was adopted, which insured safety to the minister in the event of detection, and yet interfered with none of the advantages of success; by which Howard, although fully instructed beforehand by Cecil, expressed himself as if he acted alone, and at his own risk. It has been said, also, that the real letters of Cecil to James are preserved at Hatfield, amongst the archives of his noble descendant, and contain nothing discreditable to the Secretary. But these, probably, were letters of mere ceremony and general goodwill, which Cecil despatched by the common opportunities, and cared not who should intercept or read; nay, it is quite possible that, in the intricate spirit of the diplomacy of these times, they were written to be intercepted, and for the purpose of lulling suspicion by the innocence of their contents. At all events, nothing could be more secretly or adroitly managed than the whole correspondence between Howard, Cecil, and the Scottish King. No one had the least suspicion of the secret understanding that existed between the trio. In England, the Secretary appeared wholly en-

grossed with public affairs, and so exclusively devoted to his royal mistress, that many wondered at his indifference to James, whilst he was in truth his sole adviser. When the subject of the succession was openly canvassed; when all were looking to Scotland, and Cecil seemed to stand aloof, and, if the subject were forced upon him, spoke of the King of Scots with a coldness and indifference which blinded the most acute: James, on the other hand, acted his part with admirable dexterity; praised Cecil for his fidelity to his royal mistress; and affected great doubt whether he would eventually turn out his friend or his opponent.

On one point, however, Sir Robert and Lord Henry mistook the character of their royal correspondent. To enhance their own services and destroy their rivals, they insisted on the absolute necessity of the King following out the precise plan which they had sketched out for him, and declining all offers of assistance but what came through themselves. Northumberland, Raleigh, Shrewsbury, Cobham, were, according to their representations, utterly unworthy of credit; and were secretly engaged in courses which proved them to be bitterly opposed to his claim. To write to them, or to encourage any persons whatever who were not pointed out by his worthy and faithful Cecil, would, according to Lord Henry's opinion, be the extremity of folly, and might in a moment overthrow all the fair fabric of their hopes. Nay, they had the boldness to proceed farther; and not only attempted to work on the fears

and suspicions of the Scottish King, by warning him of his enemies in England, but threw out dark and mysterious hints of treasonable intrigues in his own Court, and even presumed to tutor him as to his conduct to his Queen. Anne of Denmark, they hinted, was a worthy Princess, yet a *woman*, and easily deceived by flatterers, who, for their own ends, were doing all they could to thwart the only measures which could guide him, under the pilotage of his worthy Cecil, to the haven where he would be. James, however, was not to be so cozened. He detected the selfishness of such conduct; called upon them, if they really knew of any plots against his life or his rights, to speak out with the manly openness of truth, and have done with dark inuendoes. Following his own judgment, he treated with contempt their prohibition as to "secret correspondents;" wrote to Northumberland, accepting with warmth and gratitude his offers of service; welcomed with courtesy and goodwill all who made advances to him; and took care that Lord Henry Howard should know that he considered the language used regarding his Queen as a personal insult to himself. The two cunning statesmen, who had outwitted themselves in their desire to monopolize power and destroy their competitors, were astounded; and Lord Henry's apology to his inestimable King James, was as abject as his object had been mean and selfish.

James' greatest difficulty was with the Catholics, a powerful party in England; yet regarded by the Queen, and the Protestant body of her sub-

jects, with so much suspicion, that it was almost equally dangerous to his hopes to conciliate, or to practise severity. But, happily for this Prince, they were at this moment weakened by divisions; and the great question of the "succession," which had been keenly debated amongst the English Catholic exiles abroad, had eventually split them into two parties: the Spanish faction led by the celebrated Father Persons, the author of the famous Treatise on the Succession, published under the fictitious name of Doleman; and their opponent faction led by Paget. The first party had espoused the cause of the Infanta. It was to support her claim, as descended from John of Gaunt, son of Edward the Third, that the book on the succession had been written: and as long as this Princess continued single, and there was a chance of her marrying the King of Scots, or some English nobleman, it was thought not impossible that the English people might be reconciled to her accession. Her marriage, however, with the Archduke Albert, rendered the prospect desperate; and Persons, her champion, who had now deserted the Court of Spain, and removed to Rome, abandoned her cause, and confined his efforts, and those of his party, to the succession of a Catholic Prince.[1] Who this should be, he declared was a matter, to him, of indifference; but many of his supporters in England looked to Arabella Stewart, the cousin-german of James; and had formed a visionary project for her

[1] Lingard's Hist. of England, vol. viii., fourth edition, p. 388. Letter of Father Persons to the Earl of Angus, 4th Jan., 1600.

conversion to Rome, and her marriage with the Cardinal Farnese, also a descendant of John of Gaunt.[1] It was, perhaps, to this wild scheme that the Scottish King alluded, when he lamented that Arabella had been lately moved, by the persuasion of Jesuits, to change her religion;[2] but there is no evidence that Persons, who had much influence with his party in England, ever believed it practicable; and the publication of James' "Basilicon Doron," appears to have given a new turn to the ideas of this devoted Catholic, and to have persuaded him, that a Prince who could express himself with so much catholicity on some points, would, in time, "suffer himself to be guided to the truth on all." There is a remarkable letter still preserved, in which Persons, writing from Rome, describes his having read some passages of the "Basilicon" to the Pope, who, he says, could scarcely refrain from shedding tears of joy, in hearing them. "May Christ Jesus," exclaimed Persons, "make him a Catholic! for he would be a mirror to all Princes of Christendom."[3]

All this rendered the Spanish faction far less bitter than before in their feelings towards the Scottish King; whilst their opponents, the English Catholic exiles, who were led by Paget, having all

[1] Lingard's Hist. of England, vol. viii., fourth edition, p. 489. Letter of Father Persons to the Earl of Angus, 4th Jan., 1600.

[2] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, p. 118.

[3] MS. Brit. Mus., Julius, F. vi., f. 142. Persons to T. M., from Rome.

along contended that Mary Queen of Scots was the rightful heir of the English Crown, considered, as a matter of course, that her title vested, after her death, in her son. To him, therefore, they professed their readiness, on the death of Elizabeth, to transfer their allegiance: from him they looked, in return, for some alleviation of their sufferings, some toleration of their religion. And so keen were their feelings against the Spanish faction, that at the time Persons advocated the cause of the Infanta, he and his supporters met with no more determined enemies than the English Catholic exiles.[1] So far did they carry this hostility, that they entered into a secret correspondence with their own government, and lowered themselves by becoming spies and informers against their brethren.[2]

It was the anxious desire of the King of Scots to conciliate both these parties. One great argument in Persons' "Conference on the Succession," which contended that heresy must be considered an insurmountable ground of exclusion, was evidently directed against him; and had formerly given rise to a mission of Pourie Ogilvy, a Catholic baron, whom he sent, in 1595, into Italy and Spain. At Venice, and at Rome, this Envoy, acting, as he asserted, by the secret instructions of the King of Scots, represented his royal master as ready to be instructed in the Catholic faith, and to give a favourable and candid hearing to its expounders.

[1] Lingard's Hist. of England, vol. viii., fourth ed., pp. 390, 391.
[2] Lingard, Id. Ibid.

On proceeding into Spain, Ogilvy's flight was bolder, and the promises held out more tempting and decided. The King of Scots, he said, was determined to revenge the injuries and insults offered him by the Queen of England, and eagerly desired the coöperation of Philip. Why then should their majesties not enter into a treaty? His master, for his part, would become Catholic, establish the true faith in his dominions, and send his son, as a hostage for his sincerity, to be educated at the Court of Spain. In return, he required from Philip a renunciation of his claims upon the English Crown, an advance of 500,000 ducats, and an auxiliary force of 12,000 men. Philip, however, looked with suspicion on the Ambassador, who had been observed to haunt with Paget and his friends in the Low Countries. His veracity, his credentials, even his religion, were disputed; and although treated with outward courtesy by the Spanish monarch, he received little encouragement.

But James, who had a strong predilection for these mysterious missions, was not cast down; and returned to the attack. In September 1596, a second Envoy, named Drummond, who alleged that he was employed by James, repaired to the Papal Court, and carried with him a letter from the King to Clement the Eighth, in which he suggested that the residence of a Scottish Minister at the Court of Rome would have the best effects; and proposed that Drummond Bishop of Vaison, a Scotsman by birth, should be selected for that purpose. The Ambassador proposed

also, in the King's name, that the young Prince Henry, his eldest son, should be brought up in the Catholic faith, and offered to place his castle of Edinburgh in the hands of the Catholics.[1] It is extremely difficult to discover how much, or how little truth there was in these alleged intrigues of the Scottish King. Ogilvy, undoubtedly, acted not only as an Envoy of James, but a spy of Cecil; and James, when challenged by Elizabeth's Ambassador, Sir Henry Brunker, as to his letter to Clement, declared in the most pointed and solemn manner, that he never wrote, or transmitted, such a document to Rome. The letter, however, was subsequently produced, and published by Cardinal Bellarmine. It undoubtedly bore the King's signature; and, after a rigid inquiry, Lord Balmerino, the Scottish Secretary of State, a Catholic, and near relative of the Bishop of Vaison, confessed that he had smuggled in the obnoxious epistle amongst a crowd of other papers; and that the King, believing it to be a matter of form, like the rest, had signed it without glancing at its contents. This story, however, did not itself obtain belief. It was alleged that Balmerino had consented to become the scape-goat, that he might shelter his royal master; and the leniency of his punishment, for so daring an act, confirmed the suspicion. But, on whatever side the truth may be, this secret intercourse produced a favourable feeling in the great body of the Catholics towards the King of Scots. The impression in his favour was universal amongst all parties in Eng-

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir R. Cecil, pp. 157, 158.

land; and Howard assured the Earl of Mar, in a letter written in the summer of 1602, that all men spoke as freely and certainly of the succession of the King of Scots, as if they were about to take the oath of allegiance to him in his own capital.[1]

It remained only for James to take heed that no storms or commotions at home, should disturb this fair weather in England. And here, too, his happy star prevailed; and his efforts to extinguish those dreadful dissensions amongst his nobility, which, for many years, had exposed the country to all the horrors of private war, were at last successful. The Earls of Argyll and Huntly were reconciled, and their friendship cemented by the betrothment of Argyll's daughter to Huntly's son.[2] The Duke of Lennox, and the party of the Scottish Queen, were induced to forget their deadly differences with the Earl of Mar; and, last of all, that obstinate and far-ramifying blood-feud between the great houses of Murray and Huntly, which had now, for more than forty years, torn and depopulated some of the fairest portions of the country, was brought to an end by the firm and judicious arbitration of James. This success, and the extraordinary calm with which it was accompanied, occasioned the utmost joy throughout the country; and Nicolson, the English resident, informed Cecil that nothing was now heard at Court but the voice of festivity and gratulation; the nobility feasting each other, consorting like brethren, and all united

[1] Hailes' Secret Correspondence of Sir Robert Cecil, p. 127.
[2] MS. St. P. Off., Nicolson to Cecil, 1st February, 1602.

in one loving bond for the surety and service of the King.[1]

Amid these happy reconcilements, the King of Spain intimated to James his desire to send him an Ambassador; and Drummond Bishop of Vaison, solicited permission to visit his native country. The King of France, also, in great secrecy, proposed a new league with Scotland, with the object of strengthening himself against Spain; but as Henry added nothing as to including England, the Scottish King seized the opportunity to convince Elizabeth of his fair dealing. He accordingly despatched Roger Ashton with a full account of all his foreign negotiations; made her participant of his secret intelligence from Spain; communicated the private offers of Henry the Fourth; and, expressing his deep gratitude for her steady friendship, requested her advice regarding the answers he should send to France and Spain.[2] The Queen, in reply, cautioned him against putting implicit trust in the promises of the French King, whose sincerity she doubted. "Let others promise," said she, "and I will do as much with truth as others with wiles." However, it would do little harm, she observed, to put Henry to the test; and for her part she would make one of any league that was proposed. As to secrecy and taciturnity, he might thoroughly depend upon her: her head might fail, but her tongue

[1] MS. Letter, St. P. Off., Nicolson to Sir Robert Cecil, 1st February, 1602.

[2] MS. Letters, St. P. Off., Royal Letters, Scotland, Elizabeth to James, 4th July, 1602.

never.[1] It was on this proposal of Philip, which came somewhat suspiciously about the same time as the Bishop of Vaison's offered visit, that Elizabeth addressed, in the beginning of January 1602-3, her last confidential letter to James. It was written entirely with her own hand, now so tremulous from age as to make the characters almost illegible; but there was nothing of weakness or irresolution in the sentiments. It is here given entire: dated the 5th January, 1603, eleven weeks before her death; which makes it probable that it was amongst the last letters of importance she ever wrote:—

"My very good Brother,—It pleaseth me not a little that my true intents, without gloses or guiles, are by you so gratefully taken; for I am nothing of the vile disposition of such as, while their neighbours' houses is, or likely to be a-fire, will not only not help, but not afford them water to quench the same. If any such you have heard of towards me, God grant he remember it not too well for them! For the Archduke: alas, poor man, he mistaketh everybody like himself, (except his bonds,) which, without his brother's help, he will soon repent.

"I suppose, considering whose apert[2] enemy the King of Spain is, you will not neglect your own honour so much to the world (though you had no particular love to me) as to permit his Embassador in your land, that so causelessly prosecutes such a Princess as never harmed him; yea, such a one as

[1] Elizabeth to James, Royal Letters, St. P. Off., 4th July, 1602.
[2] "Apert," open.

(if his deceased father had been rightly informed) did better merit at his hands than any Prince on earth ever did to other. For where hath there been an example that any one King hath ever denied so fair a present, as the whole seventeen provinces of the Low Countries? yea, who not only would not have denied them, but sent a dozen gentlemen to warn him of their sliding from him, with offer of keeping them from the near neighbours' hands, and sent treasure to stay the shaking towns from lapse.—Deserved I such a recompense as many a complot both for my life and kingdom? Ought not I to defend and bereave him of such weapons as might invade myself? He will say, I help Holland and Zealand from his hands. No. If either his father or himself would observe such oath, as the Emperor Charles obliged himself, and so in sequel his son,—I would not [have] dealt with others' territories; but they hold these by such covenants, as not observing, by their own grants they are no longer bound unto them. But though all this were not unknown to me, yet I cast such right reasons over my shoulder, and regarded their good, and have never defended them in a wicked quarrel; and, had he not mixed that Government, contrary to his own law, with the rule of Spaniards, all this had not needed.

"Now for the warning the French gave you of Veson's embassage. To you, methinks, the King (your good brother) hath given you a *caveat*, that being a King he supposes by that measure you would deny such offers. And since you will have my coun-

sel, I can hardly believe that (being warned) your own subject shall be suffered to come into your realm, from such a place, to such intent. Such a Prelate (if he came) should be taught a better lesson than play so presumptuous and bold a part, afore he know your good liking thereof, which I hope is far from your intent: so will his coming verify to much good Mr Symple's asseverations at Rome, of which you have or [ere] now been warned enough.

"Thus you see how to fulfill your trust reposed in me, which to infringe I never mind, I have sincerely made patent my sincerity; and though not fraught with much wisdom, yet stuffed with great good will. I hope you will bear with my molesting you too long with my *scrattinge* hand, as proceeding from a heart that shall be ever filled with the sure affection of

"Your loving and friendly Sister."[1]

Nothing, certainly, could be more friendly than this advice; and James, who was convinced that everything was now prepared for his pacific succession, and that he had no longer anything to dread, either from aspirants abroad or intrigue and conspiracy at home, waited quietly for the event which should put him in possession of his hopes. Nor had he long to wait. Only ten days after her last letter, Elizabeth caught a severe cold at Whitehall; and as she had been warned by Dr Dee, her astrologer, to beware of

[1] MS. Letters, St. P. Off., Royal Letters, Scotland. Indorsed 5th January, copy of her Majesty's Letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand. It is now printed for the first time.

that palace, she exposed herself to a removal to Richmond in stormy weather, and after a slight amendment became worse. Up to this time she had struggled sternly and strongly against every symptom of increasing weakness. It had long been evident to all about her that, since the death of Essex, her mind and constitution had been perceptibly shattered. Her temper was entirely broken; and, in spite of every effort to defy it, a deep melancholy, and weariness of life, had fixed upon her. But although this was apparent to near observers,[1] to the world she kept up appearances; and continued her usual fêtes and diversions, interrupted by sudden fits of silence, abstraction, and tears.[2] At last, the effort was too much; the bow, bent to its utmost endurance, snapt asunder; and her lion heart, and strong energetic frame, sunk at once into a state of the most pitiable and helpless weakness. Every effort to rouse her was ineffectual. She would take neither medicines nor nourishment; her sleep entirely forsook her, and a low hectic fever seemed to be wasting her by inches; whilst she complained of a heavy load upon the heart, which made her sigh almost incessantly, and seek, in vain, for relief in a restless change of position. These sad symptoms increased to such a degree in the beginning of March, that the physicians pronounced her case hopeless; and it was deemed right to send for the

[1] Letter of Sir John Harrington, quoted in Dr Lingard's History, vol. viii. p. 394.

[2] Birch's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 505. Harrington's Nugæ Antiquæ, pp. 317, 318.

Council, who arrived at Richmond on the 18th of March; and anticipating her speedy dissolution, took such measures as were thought necessary, in that event, to secure the public tranquillity. With this object, it was resolved, that the Lord High Admiral, Howard Earl of Nottingham, the only member of the Council whose presence seemed to give comfort to the dying Queen; Cecil, the Secretary of State; and the Lord Keeper, should remain at Richmond; whilst the rest of the Council repaired to Whitehall. Orders, at the same time, were issued to set a guard upon the Exchequer; to arrest and transport to Holland all suspicious characters found lurking in London and Westminster; to furnish the Court with means of defence; and convey to the Tower some gentlemen who were believed to be desperate from discontent, and anxious for innovation. Most of these whose hands it was thus thought wise to manacle before they could use them in any sudden mischief, were partisans of Essex; and it is remarkable, that in this number we find Baynham, Catesby, and Tresham, afterwards involved in the Gunpowder Treason.

Whilst these precautions were being taken, the melancholy object of them, the Queen, seemed retired and sunk within herself; took no interest in anything that was going on; and if roused for a moment, declared that she felt no pain, required no remedies, and was anxious for death. She expressed, however, a strong desire to hear prayers in her private chapel, and all was made ready; but she found the effort too much for her, and had cushions spread at

the door of the Privy Chamber, where she lay and heard service. Want of food and sleep appear, not long after, to have brought on a partial delirium: for she now obstinately insisted on sitting up, dressed, day and night upon her cushions; and when entreated by the Lord Admiral to go to bed, assured him, with a shudder of terror, that if he had seen what she saw there, he would choose any place but that. She then motioned him to approach her; and ordering the rest to leave the room, drew him with a piteous gesture down to her low seat, and exclaimed, "My Lord, they have bound me: I am tied with an iron collar about my neck."[1] It was in vain he attempted either argument or consolation: no power would make her undress or go to bed; and in this miserable state she sat for two days and three nights, her finger pressed upon her lips, as if afraid of betraying some secret; her eyes open and fixed on the ground, and generally silent and immoveable.[2] Yet, when Cecil her Secretary remonstrated against this, and asked if she had seen spirits, she smiled contemptuously, and said the question was not worthy an answer; but when he told her she must go to bed, if it were but to satisfy her people, she showed a flash of her former spirit. "Must!" said she; "is must a word to be addressed to Princes? Ah, little man, little man! thy father, had he been alive, durst not have used that word; but

[1] Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397. Camden's Elizabeth in Kennet, vol. ii. p. 653. Carey's Memoirs, p. 117.

[2] Turner's History of Elizabeth, pp. 700, 701. Birch's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 507.

thou art presumptuous, because thou knowest I shall die." To the same minister she repeatedly declared that she was not mad, and that he must not think to make Queen Joan of her: alluding, perhaps, to Joanna the deranged Queen of Naples.[1]

It was now thought right to summon the ministers of religion; upon which the aged Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishop of London her Almoner, immediately repaired to Richmond; and being admitted to her sick chamber, appeared to give her comfort by their ministrations and prayers. They attempted to induce her to take some nourishment, and to follow the prescriptions of her physicians; but this she steadily refused, declaring that she had no wish to live. They then exhorted her to provide for her spiritual safety; to which she mildly answered, "That I have done long ago."[2] When the Archbishop, who was affected by the deep despondency and melancholy into which she had sunk, attempted to rouse and comfort her by alluding to the services she had conferred on Europe, and by her glorious defence of the Protestant faith, she checked him severely, declaring that she had too long listened to the voice of flattery, and that it should at least be silent on her death-bed; but she held him by the hand, and compelled him to continue his prayers, till the aged primate's knees were wearied, and he had almost sunk down at her bed-side. At last she permitted him to depart, after receiving his blessing. In

[1] MS. of Lady Southwell, quoted by Dr Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397.
[2] Sloan MSS., printed by Ellis, 2d Series, vol. iii. p. 194.

these devotions she did not join audibly, for her speech had almost entirely left her for two days before her death; but it was apparent to those around her that she was perfectly sensible; and they had the comfort of seeing her lift her eyes to heaven and join her trembling, emaciated hands in the attitude of prayer.[1]

To the latest moment of her life she seemed willing to keep up the mystery as to her successor, and either evaded the question, or replied so obscurely, that it was difficult to divine her wishes. On the night, however, on which she died, Cecil made a last effort for the King of Scots; and accompanied by the Lord Admiral Howard, and the Lord Keeper, earnestly requested her to name a successor. Her answer was proud and brief: "My seat has been the seat of kings, and none but a king must succeed me." They urged her to be more explicit, and mentioned the King of France; but she was silent. They then ventured on the King of Scots; but she vouchsafed no sign. The Lord Beauchamp, the heir of the house of Suffolk by his mother Lady Catherine Grey, was then spoken of; upon which she roused herself and said, with a look and flash of her former lion spirit, "I will have no rascal's son in my seat."[2] Here, according to the account of Lady Southwell, one of her maids of honour, who stood at the moment beside

[1] Carey's Memoirs, pp. 120, 122. It is remarkable that no proposal to receive the blessed communion was made by the dying Queen or the Bishops.

[2] MS. by Lady Southwell, Lingard, vol. viii. p. 397.

the bed, the important interview ended; and the Queen never again spoke. But, on the other hand, it was positively affirmed by Cecil, and the two lords his companions, that at a later hour of the same night she clearly declared by signs that the King of Scots, alone ought to succeed her. When his name was mentioned, it is said she suddenly started, heaved herself up in the bed, and held her hands jointly over her head in manner of a crown. It is probable that this sign given by the dying Princess was one of assent; yet, it is possible, also, that they who had seized the awful moment when her soul was hovering between the two worlds to torture her with questions, may have mistaken a movement of agony for one of approbation.[1]

Soon after this she sunk into a state of insensibility, and about midnight fell into a placid sleep, from which she woke to expire gently and without a struggle. Cecil and the Lords at Richmond, instantly posted to London; at six in the morning the Council assembled; and on that same morning, before ten o'clock, King James the Sixth was proclaimed heir and successor to Elizabeth, both by proximity of blood, and, as it was now positively added, by her own appointment upon her death-bed. Sir Robert Carey, Lord Hunsdon's youngest son, a near relative and favourite of the Queen, was at Richmond during her few last miserable days of suffering; and Lady Scrope, his sister, one of her ladies, watched her royal mistress at the moment of her death. Both were

[1] Sloan MSS., printed by Ellis, 2d Series, vol. iii. p. 194.

friends and correspondents of the King of Scots, and it had been concerted between the brother and sister that the distinction of being the first to announce the happy news to that monarch should be theirs. It was difficult, however, to cheat the vigilancy of Cecil and the Council, who had ordered all the gates of the palace to be closed; but Carey was on the alert, ready booted and spurred; his sister stood beside the bed, watching for her mistress' last sigh; and the moment it was breathed, she snatched a ring from her finger, (it had been a gift from the King of Scots,) glided out of the chamber, and cast it over the palace window to her brother, who threw himself on horseback, and rode post into Scotland. The Queen had died at three o'clock on Thursday morning and Carey reached the palace of Holyrood on Saturday night, after the royal expectant had retired to bed. He was immediately admitted; and throwing himself on his knees, saluted James as monarch of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland. The King asked for the token; and Carey, drawing the ring from his bosom, presented it in his sister's name. James then gave him his hand to kiss; and without evincing any unseemly exultation, bade the messenger good night, and composed himself to rest. Next morning, and for the two succeeding days, the news was not made public, as Carey's message was not official; but on the third day Sir Charles Percy, brother to the Earl of Northumberland, and Thomas Somerset, son of Lord Worcester, arrived with a letter from the Privy Council of England, announcing

the death of the Queen; the proclamation of James' accession to the throne; and the universal joy and impatience with which the people of England expected their new monarch. It assured him that their sorrow for their recent loss was extinguished by looking forward to the heroical virtues which resided in his person; laid at his feet the humble offering of their faith and obedience; and besought him, in his excellent wisdom, to visit them with all speed, that he might take possession of his inheritance, and inspire new life into its languishing body.[1]

This great event was now communicated to the people, who received it at first with universal demonstrations of exultation and delight, and the King declared his determination to set out speedily for his new kingdom, leaving the Queen and his children to follow at a slower pace. He committed the government of Scotland to the Privy Council; intrusted his eldest son, Henry, now Prince of Wales, to the Earl of Mar; Prince Charles to Sir Alexander Seton, President of the Session; and the Princess Elizabeth to the Earl of Linlithgow. On the succeeding Sunday, James attended service in the High Church of St Giles, where, after a sermon was preached, in which the minister enumerated the many mercies poured out upon their Prince; and described, as none of the least, his peaceable accession to that mighty kingdom which now awaited him. The monarch himself then rose and delivered a valedictory address to the congregation, which, we are told, was often interrupted

[1] Spottiswood, pp. 473, 474.

by the tears of the people. James, who was himself moved by these expressions of regret and affection, entreated his subjects not to be too deeply troubled at his departure; assured them that they should find the fruits of his government as well afar off as when he had resided amongst them; pleaded that his increase in greatness did in nowise diminish his love; and promised them a personal visit once every three years; when the meanest, as well as the greatest, should have access to his person and permission to pour their complaints into his bosom.[1]

This farewell oration was delivered on the 3d of April, 1603. On the 5th of the same month the King, surrounded by a large and brilliant cavalcade, composed not only of Scottish but of English noblemen and gentlemen, who had hurried to his Court with the proffers of their homage, took his departure from Edinburgh amid the lamentations of the citizens. His progress through England, which occupied a month, was one long and brilliant pageant. Triumphs, speeches, masques, huntings, revels, gifts, all that wealth could command, and flattery and fancy devise, awaited him at the different cities and castles which he visited; and on the 6th of May, 1603, he entered London, accompanied by a numerous concourse of his nobility and councillors, guarded and ushered by the Lord Mayor and five hundred citizens on horseback, and welcomed by the deafening shouts of an immense multitude of his new subjects. It seemed as if the English people had in this brief

[1] Calderwood, p. 472. Spottiswood, p. 476.

period utterly forgotten the mighty Princess, whose reign had been so glorious, and over whose bier they had so lately sorrowed. Not a murmur was heard, not one dissenting voice was raised to break the unanimity of his welcome; and thus, after so many centuries of war and disaster, the proud sceptre of the Tudors was transferred to the house of Stewart, with a tranquillity and universal contentment which, even considering the justice of the title, was remarkable and unexpected.

In this memorable consummation, it was perhaps not unallowable, certainly it was not unnatural, that the lesser kingdom, which now gave a monarch to the greater, should feel some emotions of national pride: for Scotland had defended her liberty against innumerable assaults; had been reduced, in the long struggle, to the very verge of despair; had been betrayed by more than one of her Kings, and by multitudes of her nobles; had been weakened by internal faction, distracted by fanatic rage; but had never been overcome, because never deserted by a brave, though rude and simple people. Looking back to her still remoter annals, it could be said, with perfect historical truth, that this small kingdom had successfully resisted the Roman arms, and the terrible invasions of the Danish Sea Kings; had maintained her freedom, within her mountains, during the ages of the Saxon Heptarchy, and stemmed the tide of Norman conquest; had shaken off the chains attempted to be fixed upon her by the two great Plantagenets, the First and Third Edwards, and, at a

later period, by the tyranny of the Tudors; and if now destined, in the legitimate course of royal succession, to lose her station as a separate and independent kingdom, she yielded neither to hostile force nor to fraud, but willingly consented to link her future destinies with those of her mighty neighbour: like a bride, who, in the dawning prospect of a happy union, is contented to resign, but not to forget, the house and name of her fathers. Yet, however pleased at this pacific termination of their long struggles, the feelings with which his ancient people beheld the departure of their prince, were of a melancholy nature; and an event occurred on the same day on which he set out, that made a deep impression upon a nation naturally thoughtful and superstitious.

As the monarch passed the house of Seton, near Musselburgh, he was met by the funeral of Lord Seton, a nobleman of high rank; which, with its solemn movement and sable trappings, occupied the road, and contrasted strangely and gloomily with the brilliant pageantry of the royal cavalcade. The Setons were one of the oldest and proudest families of Scotland; and that lord, whose mortal remains now passed by, had been a faithful adherent of the King's mother: whose banner he had never deserted, and in whose cause he had suffered exile and proscription. The meeting was thought ominous by the people. It appeared, to their excited imaginations, as if the moment had arrived when the aristocracy of Scotland was about to merge in that of Great Britain; as if the Scottish nobles had finished their career of national glory, and this last

representative of their race had been arrested on his road to the grave, to bid farewell to the last of Scotland's Kings. As the mourners moved slowly onward, the monarch himself, participating in these melancholy feelings, sat down by the way-side, on a stone still pointed out to the historical pilgrim; nor did he resume his progress till the gloomy procession had completely disappeared.[1]

It is with feelings of gratitude, mingled with regret, that the Author now closes this work—the history of his country—the labour of little less than eighteen years: gratitude to the Giver of all Good, that life and health have been spared to complete, however imperfectly, an arduous undertaking; regret that the tranquil pleasures of historical investigation, the happy hours devoted to the pursuit of truth, are at an end, and that he must at last bid farewell to an old and dear companion.

LONDON, *26th October*, 1843.

[1] History of the House of Seyton, Bannat. Club Edition, p. 60. History of Scotland, by Sir Walter Scott, vol. ii. p. 426.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

FROM

MANUSCRIPTS

IN

HER MAJESTY'S STATE PAPER OFFICE,

AND OTHER COLLECTIONS,

HITHERTO UNPRINTED.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

I.

Huntly's Rebellion, with Errol, Angus, and Bothwell. Page 28.

On the 16th March, 1588-9, Elizabeth sent the following private letter to James, remonstrating with him against his misplaced lenity to Huntly and the Catholic faction. It was delivered to the King by the English resident Ashby, on the 21st March, as we learn by the following passage from that gentleman's letter to Lord Burghley. (St. P. Off.)

"The 21, early in the morning, I received a letter from your Honor, with the inclosed of her Majesty's; which I presented to him that day." * * Ashby afterwards tells us the King liked the Queen's letter, and meant to prosecute the matter against the Catholic lords with severity. As to the Spaniards, against whose stay in Scotland Elizabeth so proudly remonstrated, calling them "the spoils of her wreck," the same gentleman writes Burghley, "that it is thought as many as a thousand are dispersed over Scotland; and how they are to be transported, unless her Majesty go to charges, he cannot tell." This fact is new.

Elizabeth to James.[1]

"My dear Brother.—I am driven, through the greatness of my care for your safe estate, to complain to yourself of yourself; wondering not a little what injurious planet against my nearest neighbours reigneth with such blindness, and suffereth them not to see their changing peril and most imminent danger. Shall I

[1] Warrender MS., vol. A., p. 196.

excuse them they know it not? I am too true a witness that ignorance cannot excuse, as having been a most near spy to find out those treacheries. Must I say they dare not? Far be it from kingly magnanimity to harbour within their breast so unseemly a guest. Have I no excuse to serve them for payment? Well, then must I wail that I cannot mend; and if there befall them mishap, I am not guilty of such disaster. Yet can I not desist, though I might be discouraged, to beseech you in God's name, not to overstep such happy occasions as it hath pleased God to reveal unto you: for if, when they be at your side, you will not make yourself a profit of their wreck, how will you catch them when they are aloof from you?

"Let too late examples show you for pattern, how dishonourable it is to prolong to do by right, that [which] after they are driven to do by extremity; yea, and perchance as being taught to take heed, they will shun the place of danger; and so your danger worse than the others.

"It had been for honour and surety never to have touched, than so slightly to keep them in a scorn in durance, to be honoured with your presence with all kindness, and soon after to be extolled to your dearest chamber. Good Lord! what uncouth and never-heard-of trade is that? You must pardon my plain dealing: for if my love were not greater than my cause, as you treat it, I should content myself to see them wrecked with dishonour that contemn all loving warning and sister-like counsel. I pray God there be left you time (you have dealt so untimely) to be able to apprehend and touch, such as dares boldly, through your sufferance, attempt anything they list, to bring you and your land to the slavery of such as never yet spared their own. I know not how gracious they will be to you and your realm. When they got footing, they will suffer few feet but their own. Awake, therefore, dear Brother, out of your long slumber: and deal like a king who will ever reign alone in his own. If they found you stout, you should not lack that would follow you, and leave rotten posts.

"I marvel at the store you make of the Spaniards, being the spoils of my wreck. You wrote me word not one should bide with you; and now they must attend for more company. I am sorry to see how small regard you have of so great a cause. I may claim by treaty that such should not be; but I hope, without such claim, (seeing your home practices,) you will quickly ride

your realm of them, with speed; which I do expect for your own sake, and not the least for mine; of whom you may make sure reckoning (if you abandon not yourself) to be protected by for ever.

"And thus I end with axing a right interpretation of my plain and sincere meaning; and wish ever to you as to myself; as knoweth the Lord, whom ever I beseech to preserve you with long and happy days.—xvi. Martii, 1588.

"ELIZABETH R."

Indorsed, Copie of a letter from the Queen, 1588.

II.

Pages 49 and 51.

It appears by a letter of Mr R. Bowes, the English Ambassador at the Scottish Court, to Lord Burghley, dated at Edinburgh, 4th June, 1590, that on the 3d June he received the following letter of Elizabeth to James, and presented it next day (the 4th) to the King of Scots. "He received," says Bowes, "her Majesty's letter very friendly; showing himself much pleased and conforted therewith." The person against whom Elizabeth had remonstrated, deprecating his being sent on so weighty and confidential a business, was Colonel Stewart, whom she suspected, on account of his former desertion of the Protestant party.

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO KING JAMES. MS. St. P. Off., Royal Letters, 29th May, 1590.

"My conceit, I perceive, my dear Brother, hath no whit swerved from your good intent: for now I well see Colonel Steward's negotiation was not framed of his own brain, but proceeded from your earnest affection to so laudable a cause; and by your last letters, I find your earnest motion made to the two Dukes, together with their good and loving consent.

"All this moveth me to find you a redevable[1] Prince to a careful friend; and [I] do praise my judgment to have chosen so grateful a King, on whom to spend so many careful thoughts, as since your peregrination I have felt for your surety and your land's wealth: and as my thanks are manifold, so shall the memorial bide perpetual.

[1] "Redevable," Fr., beholden to; grateful.

"And for the Action, at the arrival of such a one as you are sending me, I will at large impart plainly my resolution therein, and considering it not your least regard of me, that you be heedful to deal no other ways than as may best content me. And [I] do assure you, that as I will never myself enter into it the first, yet I will ask nothing that shall not fit a King to demand, nor plead more innocency in all the cause, than my guiltless conscience, well showed by my actions, shall ever testify. And so you may be assured to get most honour, and never blot your fame with dealing in an action, when so great injury shall appear, and no just cause to enforce it.

"That I perceive the Governors of Denmark like well that other Princes of Germany should send their good consent, with joining their message, I must needs say, "the more the better" that desire such thing as is best for all Christendom; although I had thought that you, with the King of Denmark, would have sufficed. Yet if the rest do make the knot the greater, I must think my Bond to them the more, and trust the pact will be the surer.

"In the choice of such as you mind to send, this I hope you will chiefly regard: that he be none such as whose own cause or affection to the adverse part may breed a doubt of performance of the sender's will; but be chosen even such a one, as whose honest and wise endeavour may much advance the end of so good a beginning.

"My good brother, I write this the plainer that you might clearly see what one I wish, and that may suffice for all. And for that the time requireth speed, I doubt not but you will use it.

"And so I leave scribbling, but never end to love you, and assist you with my friendship, care, and prayer to the living God to send you all prosperous success, and his Holy Spirit for guide.

"Your most assured faithful Sister and Cousin."

Indorsed, 29th May, 1590. Copy of her Majesty's letter, written with her own hand to the King of Scots, sent to Mr Bowes.

III.

The following letter, written by Elizabeth to Henry the Fourth, at the time that she sent her favourite Essex with four thousand men to his assistance, is highly characteristic. It is taken from a contemporary copy preserved in the Collection of Royal Letters

in the State Paper Office. See Camden's Elizabeth, in Kennet, vol. ii. pp. 562, 563 :—

ELIZABETH TO HENRY IV., 27th July, 1591.

"Selon la promesse que toujours je garderay endroit, très cher frere, je vous mande l'aide de 4000 hommes, avec un Lieutenant qui comme il m'appertient de bien près, aussy est-il de telle qualité, et tient tel lieu chez moy, que de coustume ne se souloit esloigner q'avec nous. Mais toutes ces raisons j'ay oublié, les proposant toutes a vôtre occasion, preferant vostre necessité et désir, à mes particulières considerations. A laquelle cause je ne doute nullement que vous y respondiez, avec un honorable et soigneux respect de vŕe grandeur, a luy faire l'accueil et regard que tant d'amitié merite : vous pouvant assurer, que si (que plus je craigne) la temerité que sa jeunesse luy donne, ne se fait trop se precipiter, vous n'aurez jamais cause de doubter de la hardiesse de son service, car il n'a fait que trop sôuvent preuve qu'il ne craint hazard quelque qui soit. Et vous suppliant d'en avoir plustost de respect, qu'il est trop effroné q'on luy donne la bride.

"Mais, mon Dieu, comment reve-je, pour vous faire si deraisonnable requeste, que vous voyant tant tarder à vous conserver la vie, je fus si mal appris de respecter une plus simple creature. Seulement je vous prononce quil aura plus besoin de bride que d'esperon. Et non obstant j'espère que vous le trouverez assez habile pour conduire ses troupes à vous faire service tres agreable. Et j'ose promettre, que nos sujects y sont de s'y bonne dispositions et ont les coeurs si vaillants qu'ils vous feront services qui vous ruineront beaucoup l'ennemy si leur bonne fortune respondra à leurs desirs. Et pour salaire de toutes ces Compagnies je vous demande ces deux requestes : la premiere, que leur vie et sang vous soyent si à coeur que rien soit omis pour leur regard ainsi qu'ils soyent cheris comme qui servent, non comme mercenaires, mais franchement, de bonne affection. Aussi qu'ils ne portent le faits de trop violents hazards n'y de nre [n'etre] bien au double accompagnés et secondés. Vous etes si sage Prince, que m'assure que n'oubliez que nos deux nations n'ont trop souvent si bien accordés, qu'ils ne se souviennent de vielles descordances, ne se pensent de même terre, mais separés d'une profonde fossée. Et pourtant y tiendrez sy bien la main, que nul inconvenient leur arrive. Ayant de ma part bien instruits nos gens d'assez

bonnes leçons, lesquelles je m'assure qu'ils observeront. Et pour ne vous fatiguer de longue lettre, je finiray cet adresse, le seul memorial qu'en vous approchant près de nos quartiers, vous n'oublier de boucher chemin à Parma, de toutes parts au il doit entrer. Car je m'assuere, qu'il à receu commandement d'omettre plustot les pays-bas que la France.

" Vtre très asseurée bonne sœur et cousine,

" E. R."

IV.

The following striking and characteristic letter of Elizabeth to the Scottish King, written with her own hand, was received by Bowes, accompanied by two letters of the 14th and 17th of the same month from Lord Burghley. James was then at Dumbarton, in progress, whither the English Ambassador proceeded; and (as he informs the Lord Treasurer in his letter from Edinburgh, dated 27th August,) " delivered her Majesty's letter, accompanying the delivery thereof with report of your Lordship's opinion in the weighty contents flowing suddenly from her Majesty's pen in your Lordship's sight." " The King," continues Bowes, " oftentimes perused and gravely noted the frame and substance of this letter; and with pleasant countenance and signs, well declaring his good acceptance, he entered into right high commendation of the excellent order, singular wisdom, and rare friendship that he found therein."

Queen Elizabeth to the King of Scots, 12th August, 1591. Page 63.

" Many make the argument of their letters of divers subjects. Some with salutations; some with admonitions; others with thanks: but, my dear brother, few, I suppose, with confession: and that at this time shall serve the meetest for my part.

" I doubt not but you wonder why it is, that in time so perilous to your person, so dangerous for your State, so hateful to the hearers, so strange for the treasons, you find me, that from your birth held most in regard your surety, should now neglect all, when it most behoveth to have watchful eyes on a most needy Prince. Now hear thereof my shrift:—It is true that my many counsels I have known oft thanked, but seldom followed. When I wished

you reign, you suffered other rule: if I desired awe, you gave them liberty. My timely warnings, became too late performance. When it required action, it was all to begin; which when I gathered, as in a handful of my memory, I will now try, quoth I, what, at a pinch, he will do for himself: for nearer than with life may no man be assailed. And hearing how audacity prevailed in so large measure, as it was made a question whether a witch for a King's life might serve for a sufficient proof, and that the price of a King's blood was set at so low a rate, with many wondering blessings I, in attentive sort, attended the issue of such an error; and not seeing any great offence laid to so slight a case, I fearfully doubted the consequence of such an act; yea, when I heard that, quakingly, men hasted to trial of such guilt, I supposed the more loved where least it became, and the most neglected to whom they owed most bond.

"Well [I] was assured, that more addition could never my warning make; and to renew what so oft was told, should be but *petitio principii*. With safe conscience having discharged my office, I betook you to your best actions, and thought for me there was no more remaining. And now I trust that this may merit an absolution, I will make you partaker of my joy, that I hear you now begin (which would to God had sooner been!) to regard your surety, and make men fear you, and leave adoring false saints. God strengthen your kingly heart, and make you never fail yourself; for then who will stick to you? You know me so well as no bloody mind ever lodged in my breast: and hate bear I none to any of yours, God is witness. But ere your days be shortened, let all yours be. This my charity."

Royal Letters, St. P. Off., 12th August, 1591. Indorsed, Copy of her Majesty's letter to the K. of Scots. Written with her H. hand.

V.

This indignant and characteristic letter of Elizabeth was written to express her deep resentment of the manner in which Henry had treated her auxiliary force sent under the command of Essex. Camden, p. 563.

ELIZABETH TO HENRY IV., 9th November, 1591.

"Ma plume, ne toucha jamais papior, qui se fits sujet à argument

si estrange, pour monstrer ung nouvel accident d'une mal injuriée amitié, par tel a qui le seul appuy, a estre ministré par la partie la plus offensée. De nos ennemis, nous n'attendions que tout malencontre: Et si aultant nous prestent les amis, qu'ell difference en trouvons nous? Je m'estonne, qu'il est possible que celuy qui tient tant de besoing d'aide, paye en si mauvaise monnoye ses plus asseurés. Pouvez vous imaginer, que mon sexe m'aridit le courage pour ne me ressentir d'ung public affront. Le sang royal, si j'en ay, ne l'endureroit du plus puissant Prince en la Chretienneté, tel traistement, qu'en ces trois mois vous m'avez presté. Ne vous desplaisse que je vous dise rondement, que si ainsi vous traister vos amis, qui librement de bonne effects vous servent en temps le plus important, vous en faillerez doresnavant, en vos plus grands besoings. Et j'eusse presentement revoqué mes troupes n'eust été que votre ruine me semble se présenter, si par mon exemple les aultres, doubtants de semblable traitement, vous delaissent. Ce qui me pour quelque peu de tems [fait] prolonger leur demeure, me rougissant que je suis faicts spectacle du monde de Princesse meprisée, Priant le Createur vous inspirer meilleur mode de conserver vos amis.

"Vtre soeur qui plus merite qu'elle n'a,

"E. R."

VI.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, 25th November, 1591.—Page 63.

"As my care for your weal, my dear brother, hath been full long the desire of my endeavours, so though my many letters do not oft cumber your eyes with the reading them, yet my ever-living watchfull head hath never been neglected; as by proof, even now, the errand that this bearer brings you, may make you know; which being even that nearly doth touch your surety and state, I conjure you, even for the worth that you prize yourself at, that you *forslowe*[1] not (after your usual manner) this matter, as you too much, ere now, have done such like: and ever remember, that the next step to overturn a Royal seat, is to make the subject know, that whatever he doth may be either coloured or neglected; of which either breeds boldness to

[1] To forslowe; to omit, or lose by deferring.

shun the pain, whatsoever the offence deserves. Far better it were, that all pretence of cause be debarred, than threaten, ere one strike, and so the prey escape. Shun in the handling of my overture [speaking] of what is meant; but after wise resolution of what behoves, let few or, if possible, none know, afore that be ended which is thought to be done. This is, in short, my advice; as she that too plainly sees, that if you defer, you may fortune repent. Yea, and you trust too much some, that can have many cords to their bow: these may, perhaps, overthrow the mark, or you hit the blank. Excuse my plainness, and let good will plead my pardon. God bless you.

"Yo^r most assured Sister,

"ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, St. Paper Office. Indorsed, 25th November, 1591. Copie of her Ma^ties Lre to the K. of Scotts, by Mr Hudson.

VII.

A short sentence of the following letter from Elizabeth to James has been already given in the text, (p. 63;) but the whole epistle, which is preserved in Sir George Warrender's MSS., and written wholly in the Queen's own hand, is too characteristic to be omitted. I have, generally, in Queen Elizabeth's letters, modernized the spelling: this, for the reader's amusement, I give in her own peculiar orthography:—

QUEEN ELIZABETH TO KING JAMES VI., 4th December, 1592. Page 81.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—If the misfortune of the messenger had not protracted so longe the riciate of my lettars, I had sonar receved the knowlelege of such matter, as wold have cried my sonar answer to causes of suche importance; but at length, thoght longe:

"First, I perceave how to the privy snaris of your seeming friends, yow have so warily cast your yees as that your [mind] hath not been trapped with the fals shewis of such a kindness, but have wel remembred, that proved cares and assured love aught of mere justice tafe [to have] the upperhand, of begiling debaits, and coulored treasons.

"Yow forget not, I percaive, how yow should have served ons [once] for prey to enter the hands of a foreaner's rule, even by the intisement of him, that offars you that he cannot get; wiche if he ever [got], should serve *his* trofe, not *yours*, whose land he seakes but to thrale both. Hit glads me much, that yow have more larger sight than the [they] supposed that wold have limed you so. And for my part, I rendar my many thankis to your selfe for your selfe, as she that skornis his malice, and eanvies not his intent.

"My enemy can never do himself more skar, than to wil my giltles wrack, who or now, himself knowes, hath preserved him his cuntryes, who since hath sought mine. Suche was his reward. God ever shild you from so crouked a wil as to hazard your own, in hope of saiving another.

"Yow know right wel, ther is a way to get, that doth precede the attempt. Whan he hath won the entry, you shal have lest part of the victory, who sekes to make (as oft hath bin) your subjects theirs. Suppose, I beseeche you, how easely he wyl present yow the best, and kepe the worst for him. This matter is so plain, hit nedes smal advis.

"Preserve yourselfe in such state as you have. For others begile not your selfe, that injuriously you may get. There is more to do in that than *wiles and wiches*. Look about with fixed yees, and sure suche to yow, as sekes not more yours than you. Draw not such as hange their hopes on other stringes than you may tune. Them that gold can corrupt, thinke not your gifts can assure. Who ons have made shipwrack of ther country, let them never injoy hit. Wede out the wedes, lest the best corn festar. Never arm with powere suche whos bettarnis must folowe *after* you; nor trust not to ther trust, that, undar any coular, wyl tral [thrall] their own soile.

"I may not, nor wol conciel, overturs that of late hath ful amply bene made me, how you may playnly knowe, all the combinars aganst your State, and how yow may intrap them, and so assure your kingdom; but . . . . . not presenting [permitting] hit a spoile to st . . . . . courtsy, one or more of ther owne—is this actor, and therefore [know you] best in whiche he standeth to your[1] . . . . . Wither if this be, he may desarve surty of life, or of land, nor livehode; but suche as may praserve brethe to spend whan best

[1] The original is here torn and illegible.

shal please you.[1] My answer was whan I se the way how, I wil impart hit to whom hit most apartanis.

"Now bethink, my deare brother, what furdar yow wyl have me do. In meanwhile, beware to give the raines into the hands of any, lest hit be to late to revoke suche actions done. Let no one of the Spanishe faction in your absence, yea, whan you were present, reccave strengt or countenance. Yow knowe, but for you, al of them to be alike to me for my particular; yet I may not deny but I abhorre suche as sets their country to sale. And thus committing yow to God's tuition, I shal remain the faithful holdar of my vowed amitie without spot or wrinkel.

"Your affectionat Sistar and Cousin,

"ELIZABETH."

This letter is directed "To our dearest Brother the King of Scots." It is indorsed in a small hand of the time, "Delivered be Mr Bowes, 4th Decem. 1592." See Historie of James the Sext. p. 261.

VIII.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE NOBILITY IN SCOTLAND. 1st July, 1592.[2]—Page 87.

Earls.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Duke of Lennox	Stewart	Prot.	Of 20 years. His mother, a Frenchwoman. Married the third daughter of the late Earl of Gowrie. She is dead. His house, castle of Methven.
Arran	Hamilton	Prot.	Of about 54 years. His mother, Douglas, daughter to the Earl of Morton who was earl before James the Regent. His house, Hamilton; and married this Lord Glames' aunt.
Angus	Douglas	Doubtful	Of 42 years. His mother, Graham, daughter to the Laird of Morphy. Married the eldest daughter of the Lord Oliphant. His house, Tantallon.

[1] This sentence is evidently imperfect, but so it runs in the original.

[2] MS. St. P. Off. There is also a copy in Brit. Mus., Caligula, D. II., 80.

Earls.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
		1	
Huntly.	Seton-Gordon	Papist	Of 33 years. His mother, daughter to Duke Hamilton. Married the now Duke of Lennox's sister. His house, Strabogy.
Argile	Campbell	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, sister to the Earl Marshall, this Earl's father. Not yet married. His house, Dynoon.
Athol	Stewart	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, daughter to the Lord Fleming. Married this Earl of Gowrie's sister. His house, Dunkeld.
Murray	Stewart	Young	Of 10 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Murray, Regent, by whom this Earl's father (slain by Huntly) had that Earldom. Not Married. His
		2	house, Tarnaway.
Crawford	Lindsay	Papist	Of 35 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl Marshall. Married first the Lord Drummond's daughter, and now the Earl of Athol's sister. His house, Fin-
		3	haven.
Arrol	Hay	Papist	Of 31 years. His mother, Keith, daughter to the Earl Marshall. Married first the Regent Murray's daughter, next Athol's sister, and now hath to wife Morton's daughter. His house, Slanes.
Morton	Douglas	Prot.	Of 66 years. His mother, Erskine, daughter of the Lord Erskine. Married to the sister of the Earl of Rothes. His house, Dalkeith.
Marshall	Keith	Prot.	Of 38 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Errol. Married this Lord Hume's sister. His house, Dunotter.

Earls.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Cassillis	Kennedy	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, Lyon, aunt to this Lord Glames, and who now is the Lord John Hamilton's wife. Not married.
Eglinton	Montgomery	Young	Of 8 years. His mother, Kennedy, daughter to the Laird of Barganie. Unmarried.
Glencairn	Cunningham	Prot.	Of 40 years. His mother, Gordon of Lochinvar. Married the Laird of Glenurchy's daughter, Gordon. His house, Glencairn.
Montrose	Graham	Papist	Of 49 years. His mother, daughter of the Lord Fleming. Married the Lord Drummond's sister. Auld Montrose, in Angus.
Menteith	Graham	Young	Of 19 years. His mother, daughter to the old Laird of Drumlanrig. Married to Glenurchy's daughter. Kylbride.
Rothes	Lesly	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Somerville. Married first the sister of Sir James Hamilton, and then the sister of the Lord Ruthven. Castle of Lesly.
Caithness	Sinclar	Neut.	Of 26 years. His mother, Hepburn, sister to Bothwell that died in Denmark. Married this Huntly's sister. Tungesbey.
Sutherland	Gordon	Neut.	Of 36 years. His mother, sister to the Regent Earl of Lennox. Married the Earl of Huntly's sister, this Earl's aunt. His house, Dunrobyn.
Bothwell	Stewart	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, Hepburn, sister to the late Earl Bothwell. Married the sister of Archibald Earl of Angus. He stands now forfeited. Crighton.
Buchan	Douglas	Young	Of 11 years. His mother,

Earls.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
			Stewart, heretrix of Buchan. Unmarried.
Mar	Erskine	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, Murray, sister to the Laird of Tullybarden. A widower. His house, Alloway.
Orkney	Stewart	Neut.	Of 63 years. Base son of King James the Fifth. His mother, Elphingston. Married to the Earl of Cassillis' daughter.
Goury	Ruthven	Young	Of 15 years. His mother, sister to umqhile Lord Methven. Unmarried. Ruthven.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Lyndsay	Lyndsay	Prot.	Of 38 years. His mother, sister to the Laird of Lochleven. Married the Earl of Rothes' daughter. His house, Byers.
		5	
Seaton	Seaton	Papist	Of 40 years. His mother, daughter to Sir Wm. Hamilton. His wife is Montgomery, the Earl's aunt. His house, Seaton.
Borthwick	Borthwick	Prot.	Of 22 years. His mother, daughter of Buccleugh. His wife, the Lord Yester's daughter. Borthwick.
Yester	Hay	Prot.	Of 28 years. His mother, Car of Fernyhirst. His wife, daughter of the L. of Newbottle. Neidpeth.
		6	
Levingston	Levingston	Papist	Of 61 years. His mother, daughter of umquhile Earl of Morton. His wife the Lord Fleming's sister. Calendar.
Elphinston	Elphinston	Neut.	Of 63 years. His mother, Erskine. His wife, the daughter of Sir John Drummond. Elphinston.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Boyd	Boyd	Prot.	Of 46 years. His mother, Colquhoun. His wife the Sheriff of Air's daughter. Kilmernok.
Semple	Semple	Prot.	Of 29 years. His mother, Preston. His wife, daughter of the Earl of Eglinton. Sempell.
Ross	Ross	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, the Lord Semplis daughter. His wife, Gavin Hamilton's daughter.
Uchiltree	Stewart	Prot.	Of 32 years. His mother, sister to the Lord Methven. His wife, Kennedy the daughter of the Laird of Blawquhen. Uchiltree.
Cathcart	Cathcart	Prot.	Of 55 years. His mother, Semple. His wife Wallace, daughter of the Laird of Cragy-Wallace. Cathcart.
Maxwell	Maxwell	Papist	Of 41 years. His mother, daughter to the Earl of Morton that preceded the Regent. His wife, Douglas, sister to the Earl of Angus.
Harris	Maxwell	Papist	Of 37 years. His mother, Harris, by whom he had the lordship. His wife is the sister of Newbottle. His house, Terragles.
Sanqhar	Crichton	Papist	Of 24 years. His mother, daughter of Drumlanrig. Unmarried. His house, Sanquhar.
Somervill	Somervill	Prot.	Of 45 years. His mother, sister to Sir James Hamilton. His wife, sister to the Lord Scaton. Carnwath.
Drummond	Drummond	Prot.	Of 40 years. His mother, daughter to the Lord Ruthven. His wife, Lyndsay, daughter of the Laird of Edzell. Drummond.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Oliphant	Oliphant	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Sandielands. His wife is Errol's sister. Duppline.
		10	
Gray	Gray	Papist	Of 54 years. His mother, the Lord Ogilvy's daughter. His wife, the Lord Ruthven's sister. Fowlis.
Glames	Lyon	Young	Of 17 years. His mother, sister to the Lord Saltoun. Unmarried.
		11	
Ogilvy	Ogilvy	Papist	Of 51 years. His mother, Campbell of Caddell. His wife, the Lord Forbes' daughter. No castle but the B. of Brichen's house.
Hume	Hume	Suspect.	Of 27 years. His mother, the L. Gray's daughter. His wife, the Earl of Morton's daughter.
		12	Hume.
Fleming	Fleming	Papist	Of 25 years. His mother, daughter of the Master of Ross. His wife, the Earl of Montrose's daughter. Bigger.
Innermeith	Stewart	Prot.	Of 30 years. His mother, the Lord Ogilvy's daughter. His wife, Lyndsay the Laird of Edzell's daughter. Redcastle.
Forbes	Forbes	Prot.	Of 75 years. His mother, Lundie. His wife, Keith.
Salton	Abernethy	Young	Of 14 years. His mother, Athol's sister, this Earl's aunt. Saltoun.
Lovat	Fraser	Prot.	Of 23 years. His mother, Stewart, aunt to Athol. His wife, the Laird of M'Kenzie's daughter.
Sinkler	Sinkler	Prot.	Of 65 years. His mother, Oliphant. His wife, the Lord Forbes' daughter. Ravens-Crage.
Torpichen	Sandilands	Young	Of 18 years. His mother,

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
			daughter of the Lord Ross. His house, Calder or Torpichen.
Thirlstane	Maitland	Prot.	Of 48 years. Married the Lord Fleming's aunt. A new house in Lowther or Lethington.

HOUSES DECAYED.

Methven	Stewart	Decayed by want of heirs; and coming to the King's hands, he hath disponed it to the Duke.
Carlisle	Carlisle	The male heirs are decayed. There is a daughter of the Lord Carlisle's married to James Douglas of the Parkhead, who hath the living, but not the honours.

LORDS OR BARONS CREATED OF LANDS APPERTAINING TO BISHOPRICKS AND ABBACIES.

Lords.	*Surnames.*	*Religion.*	*Ages.*
Altrie	Keith	Prot.	Of 63 years. His mother, Keith. His wife, Lauriston. This lordship is founded on the Abbot of Dere.
Newbottle	Ker	Prot.	Of 39 years. His mother, the Earl of Rothes' sister. His wife, Maxwell [sister] to this Lord Harris. This lordship is founded on the Abbacy of Newbottle. His house, Morphale or Preston-Grange.
		13	
Urquhart	Seaton	Papist	Of 35 years. The Lord Seaton's brother. His wife, the Lord Drummond's daughter. Founded on the Priory of Pluscardy.
Spinay	Lyndsay	Prot.	Of 28 years. The Earl of Crawford's third brother. His wife, Lyon, the Lord Glamis' daughter. This is founded on the Bishoprick of Murray. His

house is Spynay. But Huntly is heritable constable in that house.

Indorsed, "Of the Nobility in Scotland." Burghley, who had studied the paper, and marked the names of the Papists, has added, in his own hand, "A Catalogue," the date 1mo Julii, 1592; the figures over the Papists' names are also in Burghley's hand.

IX.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, June 1594.—Page 156.

The following letter of Elizabeth to James was sent immediately previous to the baptism of Prince Henry.

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—You have so well repaired the hard lines of menacing speech, that I like much better the gloss than the text; and do assure you that the last far graceth you better, and fitteth best our two amities. You may make sure account, that what counsel, advise, or mislike, my writing can make you, receiveth ever ground of what is best for you, though my interest be least in them. And, therefore, having so good foundation, I hope you will make your profit of my plainness; and remember that others may have many ends in their advices, and I but you for principal of mine.

"I render you many thanks, for bond of firm and constant amity, with most assurance of never entering with my foes in treaty or good will, until constraint of my behalf cause the breach. It pleaseth me well that this addition may assure me a perpetuity; for never shall my act deserve so foul an imputation. But I muse what such an Horace his but should need to me, whose solid deeds have never merited such a halfed suspicion. Put out of your breast therefore, my sincere heart intreats you, so unfit a thought for a royal mind; and set in such place the unfeigned love that my deserts have craved, and make a great distance betwixt others not tried, and mine so long approved.

"It gladdeth me much, that you now have falsified such bruits as forepast deeds have bred you: for tongues of men are never bridled by kings' greatness, but by their goodness; nor is it enough to say they will do well, when present acts gainsay their belief.

"We Princes are set on highest stage, where looks of all beholders verdict our works; neither can we easily dance in nets, so thick as may dim their sight. Such, therefore, our works should be, as may praise our Maker and grace ourselves. Among the which I trust you will make one whose facts shall tend to strengthen yourself, whose you feeble, and count it best spent time to govern your own and not be tutored. And since no government lasts, where duly pain and grace be not inflicted where best they be deserved, I hope no depending humours of partial respects shall banish from you that right. And as you have, I may so justly say, almost alone, stood princely to your own estate, without prizing others' lewdness, that scarcely could afford a grant to a true request, or an yea to well tried crimes: so I beseech you comfort your self with this laud, that so much the more shineth your clearness thorough the foil of dim clouds, as their spot will hardly be blotted out, when your glory remains. And by this dealing, you shall ever so bind me to be your faithful Watch, and stanch Sister, that nothing shall I hope pass my knowledge, that any way may touch you, but I will both warn and ward in such sort, as your surety shall be respected, and your state held up, as God, that best is witness, knoweth; whom ever I implore to counsel you the best, and preserve your days.

"Your affectionate Sister and Cousin,

"E. R.

"Such remembrance of my affection as I send, take in good part, as being, such my affairs as now they be, more than millions sent from a richer prince, and fraughted with fewer foes; which I doubt not but in wisdom you can consider, and as, in some part, I have at length dilated to this gent."

Royal Letters, State Paper Office, Indorsed, June 1594. M. of her Ma^ts. L^re w^th her owne hand to the K. of Scotts.

X.

The following letter is taken from the original in the Warrender MSS., written entirely in the Queen's own hand:—

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, [probably 1593.]—Page 125.

"When I consider, right dear Brother, that all the chaos whereof

this world was made, consisted first of confusion, and was after divided into four principal elements, of which if either do bear too great a superiority, the whole must quickly perish; and when I see that all our beings consist of contrarieties, without the which we may not breath; I marvel the less that there do fall in your conceit, an opinion, that you could *accord* with a *discord*. It is true that, in music, sweet disorders be good rules; but in trades of lives, which bide not for moments but for years, it seld is taken for good advice: the more, I grant, is their bond, that on so dangerous foundation find a builder to venture his work.

"I will shun to be so wicked, as to turn to scorn that I suppose is grounded on ignorance; neither will I misjudge that any derision is meant, where I hope there reigns no such iniquity: therefore, I will have recourse to my best judgment, which consisteth in this thought,—that some that saw my outward show, looked not on the calends of my years; and so, through fame of seeming appearance, might delude your ears, and make suppose far better than you should find. But as my obligation is so great in your behalf, as it may permit no disguising, no more than in anything else that may concern you will I abuse you with beguiling persuasions; and thereon mind to deal with you as merchants that have no ready money; then they fall to consider of those wares that suits best their countries, and by interchange of equal utilities, makes traffic to other's best avail; procuring a continuance of friendly trade, and true intelligence, of fair good will; which is the way I choose to walk in, and even in so smooth a path as my works shall perform my word's errand; and do promise, on the faith of a king, if I find correspondence in your actions, my eyes shall give as narrow a look to what shall be your good, as if it touched the body that bears them. But if I shall find a double face of one shoulder, I protest I shall abandon my care, and leave you to your worst fortune.

"This gentleman, for your allowance and good favour, not for his good will to me, nor many practices perilous to me, of which, if he list, he may speak, I admit to my presence; whom, I assure you, I find even such as fits the judgment of your place, to esteem with no temporary honour. You may believe my judgment, that have had no cause to give him a partial censure. I perceive that God bestowed his gifts on him with no sparing hand; but even with his dole was amply enlarged.[1] But, above all, I commend his faith

[1] So in the original; but I cannot make out the sense.

to you; for whom, I see, he neglects and loseth his greatest hopes ere now, and in all your requests rather overcarries it, as though nothing must be denied your request.

"And for that part of his charge, that toucheth my particular, though at your commandment he followeth your laws, yet found I my wants such, as are far short from such an election as your choice should make you, where both youth and beauty should accompany each other; of which, though either fail, yet let not such defects make diminution of my friendship's price, which I trust to make of so true a value, that no touchstone shall try any mixture in that compound, but such as fears not trial.

"To conclude: this bearer hath well satisfied my expectation, as one that ought to make some amends for former wrongs,—to [whom] I have bequeathed the trust to lay open unto you my griefs and injuries, which, through lewd advice, you have wrought; though, I trust, coming amends may easily blot out of my memory's books. This I bequeath to the safe keeping of God: who give some wisdom to sever a sincere advice from a fraudulent counsel, and bless you from betraying snares, who takes the feet off of the hare![1]

"Your assured careful Sister and Cousin,

"Elizabeth R."

XI.

Kinmont Willie.—Page 223.

Lord Scrope, on the morning after the enterprise, wrote both to the Privy Council of England and to Lord Burghley, entreating them to move the Queen to insist on the instant delivery of Buccleugh, to be punished for this proud attempt, as he deserved. In his letter to the Privy Council, he thus describes the enterprise:—[2]

[1] This letter is not dated, and is therefore placed at the end of the correspondence; but it appears to have been sent at the time when James was (as Elizabeth thought) acting with inconsistent lenity to Huntly and the Catholics, probably some time in September, 1593. See page 125.

[2] State Paper Office, Border Correspondence, Lord Scrope to the Council, 13th April, 1596.

"Yesternight, in the dead time thereof, Walter Scott of Hardinge,[1] and Walter Scott of Goldylands, the chief men about Buclughe, accompanied with 500 horsemen of Buclughe and Kinmont's friends, did come, armed and appointed with gavlocks and crows of iron, hand-picks, axes, and scaling-ladders, unto an outward corner of the base court of this Castle, and to the posterndoor of the same; which they undermined speedily and quickly, and made themselves possessors of the base court, brake into the chamber where Will of Kinmont was, carried him away; and in their discovery by the watch, left for dead two of the watchmen; hurt a servant of mine, one of Kinmont's keepers; and were issued again out of the postern, before they were descried by the watch of the inner ward, and ere resistance could be made.

"The watch, as it should seem, by reason of the stormy night, were either on sleep, or gotten under some covert to defend themselves from the violence of the weather, by means whereof the Scots achieved their enterprise with less difficulty. * *
If Buclughe himself have been thereat in person, the captain of this proud attempt, as some of my servants tell me they heard his name called upon, (the truth whereof I shall shortly advertise,) then I humbly beseech, that her Majesty may be pleased to send unto the King, to call for, and effectually to press his delivery, that he may receive punishment as her Majesty shall find that the quality of his offence shall demerit; for it will be a dangerous example to leave this high attempt unpunished. Assuring your Lordships, that if her Majesty will give me leave, it shall cost me both life and living, rather than such an indignity to her Highness, and contempt to myself, shall be tolerated. In revenge whereof, I intend that something shall be shortly enterprised against the principals in this action, for repair thereof, if I be not countermanded by her Majesty."

"These names were taken by the informer at the mouth of one that was in person at the enforcing of this Castle, the 13th April, 1596.
The Laird of Buclughe.
Walter Scot of Goldielands.

[1] Walter Scott of Harden, who, under Buccleugh himself, seems to have been the principal leader in this daring and successful enterprise, was the direct ancestor of the present Lord Polwarth.

Walter Scot of Hardinge.
Walter Scot of Branxholme.
——— Scot named Todrigge.
Will. Ellott, Goodman of Gorrombye.
John Ellott, called of the Copshawe.
The Laird of Mangerton.
The young Laird of Whithaugh, and his sonne.
Three of the Calfhills, Jocke, Bighams, and one Ally, a bastard.
Sandy Armstronge, sonne to Hebbye.
Kinmont's Jocke, Francie, Geordy, and Sandy, all brethren, the sonnes of Kinmont.
Willie Bell, redcloake, and two of his brethren.
Walter Bell of Godesby.
Three brethren of Twada Armstrong's.
Younge John of the Hollace, and one of his brethren.
Christy of Barneglish, and Roby of the Langholm.
The Chingles.?
Willie Kange, and his brethrene, with their complices.

"The Informer saith, that Buclughe was the fifth man which entered the castle; and encouraged his company with these words —'Stand to it; for I have vowed to God and my Prince, that I would fetch out of England, Kinmont, dead or quick; and will maintain that action when it is done, with fire and sword.'"

The date on the back, April 13, is in the hand-writing of Lord Burghley.[1]

XII.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, April 1596.—Page 223.

"I am to speak with what argument my letters should be fraught, since such themes be given me, as I am loath to find, and am slow to recite. Yet, since I needs must treat of [them,] and unwillingly receive, I cannot pretermit to set afore you a too rare example of a seduced King by evil information. Was it ever seen, that a Prince from his cradle, preserved from the slaughter, held up in royal dignity, conserved from many treasons,

[1] MS. St. P. Office, April 13, 1596. Border Correspondence.

maintained in all sorts of kindness, should remunerate, with so hard measure, such dear deserts, with doubt to yield in just treaties response to a lawful friend's demand? Ought it to be put to a question, whether a King should do another his like the right? Or should a Council be demanded *their* good pleasure what *he himself* should do? Were it in the non-age of a Prince, it might have some colour; but in a Father-age, it seemeth strange, and, I daresay, without example. I am sorry for the cause that constrains this speech, especially in so apert a matter, whose root grows far, and is of that nature that it (I fear me) will more harm the wronger than the wronged; for how like regard soever be held of me, yet I should grieve too much to see you neglect yourself, whose honour is touched in such degree, as that our English, whose regard, I doubt not, you have in some esteem, for other good thoughts of you, will measure your love by your deeds, not your words in your paper.

"Wherefore, for fine, let this suffice you, that I am as evil treated by my named *friend* as I could be by my known foe. Shall any castle or habytacle of mine be assailed by a night largin, and shall not my confederate send the offender to his due punishment? Shall a friend stick at that demand that he ought rather to prevent? The law of Kingly love would have said nay; and not for persuasion of such as never can or will stead you, but dishonour you to keep their own rule, lay behind you such due regard of me, and in it of yourself, who, as long as you use this trade, will be thought not of yourself ought, but of conventions what they will. For Commissioners, I will never grant for an Act that he cannot deny that made; for what so the cause be made, no cause should have done that; and when you with a better-weighed judgment shall consider, I am assured my answer shall be more honourable and just; which I expect with more speed, as well for you as for myself.

"For other doubtful and litigious causes in our Border, I will be ready to point Commissioners, if I shall find you needful; but for this matter of so villanous a usage, assure you I will never be so answered, as hearers shall need. In this, and many other matters, I require your trust to our Ambassador, which faithfully will return them to me. Praying God for your safe keeping,

"Your faithful and loving sister,

"E. R."

Indorsed, Copie of Her Maj. Letter to the King of Scots, of her own hand.

XIII.

After Kinmont Will's Rescue and Deliverance by Buccleugh, 1596.—Page 226-227.

Elizabeth to James.

"My dear Brother,—That I see a King more considerate of what becometh him in the behalf of his like, than Councillors, that never being of such like estate, can hardlier judge what were fittest done, I marvel no more than I am glad to find yourself as greatest, so worthier of judgment, than such as, if they were as they ought, you need not have had the glory of so honourable a fact alone. But you have made me see that you can prize what were meetest, and deem how short of that they showed, who have displayed their neglect, in leaving you destitute of good advice, by their backwardness in that was their duty. And I hope it will make you look with a broad sight on such advisers, and will warn you by this example not to concur with such deceitful counsel, but will cause you either to mind their custom, or to get you such as be better minded, than to hazard you the loss of your most affectionate, in following their unseemly advice.

"For the punishment given to the offender, I render you many thanks; though I must confess, that without he be rendered to ourself, or to our Warden, we have not that we ought. And, therefore, I beseech you consider the greatness of my dishonour, and measure his just delivery accordingly. Deal in this case like a King, that will have all this Realm and others adjoining see how justly and kindly you both will and can use a Prince of my quality; and let not any dare persuade more for him than you shall think fit, whom it becomes to be echoes to your actions, no judgers of what beseems you.

"For Border matters, they are so shameful and inhuman as it would loathe a King's heart to think of them. I have borne for your quiet, too long, even murders committed by the hands of your own Wardens; which if they be true, as I fear they be, I

hope they shall well pay for such demerits, and you will never endure such barbarous acts to be unrevenged.

"I will not molest you with other particularities; but will assure myself that you will not easily be persuaded to overslip such enormities, and will give both favourable ear to our Ambassador, and speedy redress, with due correction for such demeanour. Never think them meet to rule, that guides without rule.

"Of me make this account, that in your world shall never be found a more sincere affection, nor purer from guile, nor fuller fraught with truer sincerity, than mine; which will not harbour in my breast a wicked conceit of you, without such great cause were given, as you yourself could hardly deny of which we may speed, I hope, *ad calendas græcas*.

"I render millions of thanks for such advertisements as this Bearer brought from you; and see by that, you both weigh me and yourself in a right balance: for who seeks to supplant one, looks next for the other. This paper I end with my prayers for your safety, as desireth

"Your most affectionate Sister,

"ELIZ. R."

Royal Letters, St. Paper Office. Indorsed, Copie of her Mat^{s} Lr̃e to the K. of Scotts, of hir own hand, for Mr Bowes.

XIV.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, 1st July, 1598.—Page 279.

ON THE SUBJECT OF VALENTINE THOMAS.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Suppose not that my silence hath had any other root, than hating to make an argument of my writing to you, that should molest you, or trouble me; being most desirous that no mention might once be made of so villanous an act, specially that might but in word touch a sacred person; but now I see that so lavishly it hath been used by the author thereof, that I can refrain no longer to make you partaker thereof sincerely, from the beginning to this hour, of all that hath proceeded; and for more speed have sent charge with Bowes, to utter all, without fraud or guile; assuring you that few things have dis-

pleased me more since our first amities; and charge you in God's name to believe, that I am not of so viperous a nature, to suppose or have thereof a thought against you, but shall make the deviser have his desert, more for that than ought else; referring myself to the true trust of this Gent: to whom I beseech you give full affiance in all he shall assure you on my behalf. And so God I beseech to prosper you with all his graces, as doth desire,

"Your most affectionate Sister,

"E. R."

Royal Letters, St. Paper Office. Indorsed, 1598. Pr^mo. July. Coppie of her Ma^ts. Lre to the Kinge of Scots, w^t her owne hande, concerninge Val. Thomas.

XV.

The following letter was sent by the Earl of Mar, and the Abbot of Kinloss.

JAMES TO ELIZABETH, 10th February, 1601.—Page 374.

"MADAM AND DEAREST SISTER,—As the strait bonds of our so-long-continued amity do oblige me, so, your daily example used towards me in the like case, does invite me, not to suffer any misconstrued thoughts against any of your actions to take harbour in my heart; but by laying open all my griefs before you, to seek from yourself the right remedy and cure for the same.

"And since that I have oft found by experience, that evil-affected or unfit instruments employed betwixt us, have often times been the cause of great misunderstanding amongst us, I have therefore, at this time, made choice of sending unto you this nobleman, the Earl of Mar, in respect of his known honesty and constant affection to the continuance of our amity; together with his colleague the Abbot of Kinloss (a gentleman whose uprightness and honesty is well known unto you;) that by the labours of such honest and well-affected Ministers, all scruples or griefs may on either side be removed, and our constant amity more and more be confirmed and made sound.

"Assuring myself, that my ever honest behaviour towards you shall at least procure that justice at your hands, to try or[1] ye trust any unjust imputations spread of me, and not to wrong yourself in

[1] Or; ere.

wronging your best friend; but in respect of the faithfulness of the bearers, I will remit all particulars to their relation; who, as they are directed to deal with you in all honest plainness, (the undisseverable companion of true friendship,) so do I heartily pray you to hear and trust them in all things as it were myself, and to give them a favourable ear and answer, as shall ever be deserved at your hands by

"Your most loving and affectionate Brother and Cousin,

"JAMES R.[1]

"From Holyrood House, the 10th February, 1601."

XVI.

The following letter from the English Queen, is an answer to James' letter to Elizabeth, sent by his Ambassadors the Earl of Mar and the Abbot of Kinloss.—See this volume, p. 374.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, May 1601.—Page 381.

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—At the first reading of your letter, albeit I wondered much what springs your griefs might have of many of my actions, who knows myself most clear of any just cause to breed you any annoy; yet I was well lightened of my marvel when you dealt so kindly with me not to let them harbour in your breast, but were content to send me so well a chosen couple, that might utter and receive what you mean, and what I should relate.

"And when my greedy will to know, did stir me at first access to require an ease with speed of such matters, I found by them that the principal causes, were the self same in part, that the Lord of Kinloss had, two years past and more, imparted to me: to whom and to other your ministers I am sure I have given so good satisfaction in honour and reason, as, if your other greater matters have not made them forgotten, you yourself will not deny them.

"But not willing in my letter to molest you with that which they will not fail but tell you, (as I hope,) together with such true and guileless profession of my sincere affection to you, as you shall never have just reason to doubt my clearness in your behalf; yet this I must tell you—that as I marvel much to have such a sub-

[1] Wholly in James' hand. Royal Letters, St. P. Off., sealed with the King's signet-ring.

ject that would impart so great a cause to you, afore ever making me privy thereof, so doth my affectionate amity to you, claim at your hands that my ignorance of subjects' boldness be not augmented by your silence; by whom you may be sure you shall never obtain so much good, as my good dealing can afford you.

"Let not shades deceive you, which may take away best substance from you, when they can turn but to dust or smoke. An upright demeanour bears ever more poise than all disguised shows of good can do. Remember that a bird of the air, if no other instrument, to an honest king, shall stand in stead of many feigned practices, to utter aught may any wise touch him. And so leaving my scribbles, with my best wishes that you scan what works becometh best a king, and what in end will best avail him.

"Your most loving Sister that longs to see you deal as kindly as I mean.

"ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, State Paper Office, Indorsed, Copie of her Mat^ys Letter to the King of Scots, written with her own hand.

XVII.

The following letter was entirely written in the Queen's own hand, and sent to the King by the Duke of Lennox.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, 2d December, 1601.—Page 385.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—Never was there yet Prince nor meaner wight, to whose grateful turns I did not correspond, in keeping them in memory, to their avail and my own honour; so trust I, that you will not doubt but that your last letters by Fowles and the Dyke are so acceptably taken, as my thanks can not be lacking for the same, but yields them you in thankful sort. And albeit I suppose I shall not need to trouble any of your subjects in my service, yet, according to your request, I shall use the liberty of your noble offer, if it shall be requisite.

"And whereas your faithful and dear Duke hath at large discoursed with me, as of his own knowledge, what faithful affection you bear me, and hath added the leave he hath received from you, to proffer himself for the performer of my service

in Ireland, with any such as best may please me under his charge; I think myself greatly indebted to you for your so tender care of my prosperity; and have told him that I would be loath to venture his person in so perilous service, since I see he is such one that you make so great a reckoning of, but that some of meaner quality, of whom there were less loss, might in that case be ventured.

"And sure, dear brother, in my judgment, for the short acquaintance that I have had with him, you do not prize with better cause any near unto you: for I protest without feigning or doubling, I never gave ears to greater laud, than such as I have heard him pronounce of you, with humble desire that I would banish from my mind any evil opinion or doubt of your sincerity to me. And because though I know it was but duty, yet where such show appears in mindful place, I hold it worthy regard; and am not so wicked to conceal it from you, that you may thank your self for such a choice. And thus much shall suffice for fear to molest your eyes with my scribbling: committing you to the enjoying of best thoughts, and good consideration of your careful friend, which I suppose to be,

"Yor. most aff. Sister,

"ELIZABETH R."

Royal Letters, State Paper Office. Indorsed, 2d December, 1601. Cop. of her Mat^s Ltre to the King of Scot. by the Duke of Lennox.

XVIII.

ELIZABETH TO JAMES, 4th July, 1602.—Page 397.

"MY GOOD BROTHER,—Who longest draws the thread of life, and views the strange accidents that time makes, doth not find out a rarer gift than thankfulness is, that is most precious and seldomest found; which makes me well gladded, that you methinks begin to feel how necessary a treasure this is, to be employed where best it is deserved; as may appear in those lines that your last letters express, in which your thanks be great, for the sundry cares, that of your state and honour, my dear friendship hath afforded you; being ever ready to give you ever such subjects

for your writing, and think myself happy when either my warnings or counsel may in fittest time avail you.

"Whereas it hath pleased you to impart the offer that the French King hath made you, with a desire of secrecy: believe, that request includes a trust that never shall deceive: for though many exceed me in many things, yet I dare profess that I can ever keep taciturnity for my self and my friends. *My head may fail, but my tongue shall never;* as I will not say but yourself can in yourself, though not to me, witness. But of that no more: *preterierunt illi dies.*

"Now to the French: in plain dealing, without fraud or guile, if he will do as he pretends, you shall be more beholding to him than he is to himself, who within one year hath winked at such injuries and affronts, as, ere I would have endured that am of the weakest sex, I should condemn *my* judgment: I will not enter into *his*. And, therefore, if his *verba* come *ad actionem*, I more shall wonder than do suspect; but if you will needs have my single advice, try him if he continue in that mind. And as I know that you would none of such a League, as myself should not be one, so do I see, by his overture, that himself doth: or if for my assistance, you should have need of all help, he would give it; so as since he hath so good consideration of me, you will allow him therein, and doubt nothing but that he will have me willingly for company; for as I may not forget how their league with Scotland was reciproke when we had wars with them, so is it good reason that our friendships should be mutual.

"Now, to confess my kind taking of all your loving offers, and vows of most assured oaths, that naught shall be concealed from me, that either Prince or subject shall, to your knowledge, work against me or my Estate; surely, dear brother, you right me much if so you do. And this I vow, that without you list, I will not willingly call you in question for such warnings, if the greatness of the cause may not compel me thereunto. And do entreat you to think, that if any accident so befall you, as either secrecy or speed shall be necessary, suppose yourself to be sure of such a one as shall neglect neither, to perform so good a work. Let others promise, and I will do as much, with truth as others with wiles. And thus I leave to molest your eyes with my scribbling; with my perpetual prayers for your good estate, as desireth your most

"Loving and affectionate Sister.

"ELIZABETH R.

"As for your good considerations of Border causes, I answer them by my agent, and infinitely thank you therefor."

Royal Letters, State Paper Office. Indorsed, 4th July, 1602. Copie of her Maties. Lre to the King of Scotts, sent by Mr Roger Ashton.

THE END.

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